REPRESENTATIVE SOUTHERN POETS

CHARLES · W · HUBNER

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Representative Southern Poets

BY

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C. W. H.

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INTRODUCTORY

To the scholarly and philosophic mind of Dr. Samuel Johnson we owe the wise saying that "the chief glory of every people arises from its authors." Of course he meant authors whose works represent, and are genuine and direct forces in, the development and conservation of ethical and intellectual virtues in the world; he referred to writers who help civilization in the achievement of whatever is best, truest, and most beautiful that the hand of man can give form to, or the soul can reach and transmute out of the Ideal into the Real.

Nothing can be of higher value or worthier of praise and admiration than the power and majesty of thought, vitalized by wisdom from heavenly sources and glowing with the inspiration of genius.

Thoughts, finding expression in words arranged in harmonious order, embellished with the graces of language, and permanently embodied in the form of books, are things that do not die. They transmit themselves from age to age, and posterity prizes them as a heritage of inestimable worth.

"Books," says Mrs. Browning, "are

"The only men
That speak aloud for future times to hear."

To the poets of a people, representing, as they do, the Queen of the Muses, and artists whose work embodies the highest possible manifestations of the powers of the human intellect, special honor should be given for their contributions to what constitutes, as Dr. Johnson has said, the chief glory of a people.

In the matter of literary achievements Americans have good reason to feel proud of their standing among modern nations. The best works of our poets have received the seal of the world's recognition and admiration, and a permanent place has been set aside for them in the world's literature.

Without catering to local or sectional feelings, we of the South can claim a large share of this general recognition and praise in behalf of our own poets and song-writers. Our galaxy of poets is, comparatively speaking, small in point of number, but the light it sheds is not inferior, in the matter of brilliancy, to the larger galaxies of the North or of England. Let us twine the laurel garland around the names of our native singers, nor be afraid of incurring thereby the deprecatory censure of critics, native or foreign.

We should make it our duty to study the lives and works of these poets of the South; get into intellectual touch with them; feel the influence of their inspirations, and thus place ourselves in a position to speak intelligently of them, and honor them properly because of our knowledge of them and their works. This purpose has animated me in the following work, and if it shall attain even a very moderate success in this direction, the author will feel himself amply rewarded for his labor.

FACING PAGE 15

SIDNEY LANIER

You hold a prism to your uplifted eye,
And let the Sun-god's lances pierce it through,
Sudden what splendors are revealed to you,
What wondrous blending colors you descry,
And scores of rainbows seem to span the sky!
The common things of earth fade from the view,
A world, in Eden glory robed anew
By God's own hand before you seems to lie;
To me this types the glorifying powers
Of thy pure verse, O crystal-souled Lanier!
Thy pen for Truth did holy warfare wage,
Ithuriel's spear it was, but wreathed with flowers;
Thy virgin muse recalls Art's golden age,
Its music in thy classic song we hear.

Sidney Lanier was born in Macon, Georgia, on the third day of February, 1842. On his father's side he was of French and on his mother's of Scotch descent. His father was a prominent lawyer, a man of fine ability and excellent character. The poet's mother was a woman remarkable for her many accomplishments, her strong character, and her refined and amiable disposition. Through a long line of distinguished ancestors we find fruiting and flowering in the poet the commingling elements of two of the noblest races on earth; the grace, the chivalry, the refinement, the brilliancy of

the French, combining with the sturdy independence, the deep spirituality, the clear sense and stern patriotism of the Scotch.

At a very early age the boy developed a passionate fondness for music, and learned to play several instruments. As his predominating musical gift constitutes such an important element of Lanier's artistic nature, it is interesting to trace this peculiar development to its distant hereditary source. It was transmitted to him from an ancestry distinguished for genius in music. One of his ancestors, Jerome Lanier, a Huguenot refugee, was a composer of music at the court of Queen Elizabeth, and successive Laniers were prominent musicians at the courts of James I, Charles I, and Charles II. A recent reviewer of Lanier's poetry very aptly emphasizes the fact of hereditary transmission of artistic genius, as illustrated in Lanier's case; he says that there can be few more romantic instances of the transmission of tastes and faculty than this reincarnation of Stuart music in a boy born at Macon, Georgia, in 1842.

While, as already stated, Lanier was skilful on several musical instruments, he devoted himself finally to the flute, his father having expressed a wish to that effect; his father was afraid of the fascination which the violin had for his son. Other relatives and friends were likewise somewhat alarmed at the young man's profound passion for music, the exercise of

which induced a kind of ecstasy or trance, and the reaction from which was accompanied by great nervous exhaustion. Referring to this a recent writer says, "That ecstasy so feared by his friends, is the very quality of highest value in Lanier's poetry." He was a master of the flute, through it he voiced the otherwise unutterable inspirations of his soul; it was the voice of the nightingale that lived in his heart, and the expression of his face while playing was one of intense rapture, as if he were listening to the songs of angels.

When fourteen years old he entered Oglethorpe College, at Midway, Georgia, and he graduated with honor at eighteen. While at college young Lanier was greatly troubled in mind as to what his life-work should be. Although passionately fond of music, which held him in its thrall a willing captive, and notwithstanding the fact that he felt himself competent to become a distinguished player and composer, yet he could not bring himself to believe that he was born to be a musician, "because," as he says, "it seems so small a business in comparison with other things which it seems to me I might do." So music and poetry struggled in his young breast for the mastery, poetry finally gaining the victory, by consenting to concede to her lovely opponent the right to divide the divine afflatus between them. Consequently Lanier's verse was inspired by a double power—music and poetry—as it should be.

The fact has not been so prominently set forth in the various biographies of the poet as it deserves to be, that he was famous while in college for his excellence in mathematics. He was a master in this abstruse science. His logical and imaginative faculties developed themselves in beautiful harmony. In him the poet and the philosopher found their natural affinity.

It is also related of him that while in college he was the soul of good nature, jovial and vivacious, a favorite among his mates, who loved and admired him on account of his cheerful disposition and his modest and unassuming bearing.

When he had graduated he became a teacher in this college, remaining there until the beginning of the war between the States. In April, 1861, he entered the Confederate Army as a private, and served to the close of the war. After the battle of Malvern Hill he was transferred to the Signal Service, and while in charge of a vessel that ran the blockade he was captured and imprisoned at Point Lookout. Finally, having suffered the hardships of prison life for more than five months, he was exchanged. He refers to his experiences in the army in his novel entitled "Tiger Lilies," published in 1867. For some time after the war he was employed as a clerk in a hotel in Montgomery, Alabama, and then took charge of a small academy at

Prattville, in the same State. In December, 1867, he married Miss Mary Day, of Macon, Georgia.

In January, 1868, symptoms of consumption —the dreadful disease from the effects of which he died September 7, 1881—manifested themselves in serious form, and he moved to Macon. He remained in his native city, studying and practicing law with his father, until 1872. In that year he went to San Antonio, Texas, for the benefit of his health, remaining in that delightful climate for some time. In the autumn of 1873 he became a resident of Baltimore, Maryland, having accepted an engagement to play in the Peabody Symphony Concerts. But his health did not improve, although he made frequent trips to various parts of the country, hoping that change of climate would benefit him.

In the following year his masterly poem entitled "Corn" appeared in the *Lippincott Magazine*. It is a thoughtful and beautiful poem. Out of this simple and apparently commonplace subject, which one would scarcely imagine to be fit for poetic inspiration, the genius of Lanier has made a perfect and precious thing. A few extracts will suffice to indicate the grace and power of this poem. Wandering to the zig-zag cornered fence, to look out

upon the "army of the corn" beyond, the poet's eyes take in harvests of

> "inward dignities,
> And large benignities and insights wise";

he sees and describes how

> "one tall captain stands
> Advanced beyond the foremost of his bands,"

and who

> "waves his blades upon the very edge
> And hottest thicket of the battling hedge."

This lustrous stalk the poet addresses as follows:

> "Thou shalt type the poet's soul sublime,
> That leads the vanward of his timid time,
> And sings up cowards with commanding rhyme—
> Soul-calm, like thee, yet fain, like thee, to grow
> By double increment, above, below;
> Soul-homely as thou art, yet rich in grace, like thee
> Teaching the yeomen selfless chivalry,
> That moves in gentle curves of courtesy;
> Soul-filled, like thy long veins, with sweetness tense,
> By every god-like sense
> Transmuted from the four wild elements,
> Drawn to high plans,
> Thou lif'st more stature than a mortal man's,
> Yet ever piercest downward in the mould,
> And keepest hold
> Upon the reverent and steadfast earth,
> That gave thee birth.
> Yea, standest smiling in thy very grave,
> Serene and brave,
> With unremitting breath
> Inhaling life from death,
> Thine epitaph writ fair in fruitage eloquent,
> Thy living self thy monument."

The poet, in sweet and lofty philosophy continues his similes, comparing the elements of his stalwart and lustrous corn-stalk with the nature and the work of the true poet. Then, with rapid and masterly touches, he paints a picture of a deserted Georgia farm and describes the woeful circumstances which force the farmer to forsake the old homestead, after having vainly chased the rainbow of wealth, which he imagines can be grasped by abandoning the cultivation of corn for speculative crops of cotton. The exposition which the poet gives of the processes by which the trusting but deceived cotton-farmer is finally brought to ruin is graphic and powerful.

Very dear to the heart of our great Georgia poet is the old deserted Georgian hill which

> "Bares to the sun his piteous aged crest,
> And seamy breast,
> By restless-hearted children left to lie
> Untended there beneath the heedless sky,
> As barbarous folks expose their old to die";

and in conclusion, the poet apostrophizes it in the following exquisite and majestic lines:

> "Old hill! old hill! thou gashed and hairy Lear,
> Whom the divine Cordelia of the year,
> E'en pitying Spring, will vainly strive to cheer—
> King, that no subject man nor beast may own,
> Discrowned, undaughtered, and alone—
> Yet shall the great God turn thy fate,
> And bring thee back into thy monarch state
> And majesty immaculate."

This poem was universally admired, and secured for its author the warm friendship and the valuable influence of many of the foremost writers and critics of the day. Prominent among these was Bayard Taylor, through whose instrumentality Lanier was selected to write the words for the cantata which was sung at the opening of the Centennial Exposition at Philadelphia in 1876. It will be remembered that this poem created a literary sensation at the time on account of its unique conception, its peculiar construction, and its remarkable meters and rhythmic effects. Quite a war of words took place in critical, literary, and musical circles, which were arrayed for and against the poem, and Lanier himself came to the defense of his production in a vigorous and scholarly article.

Ill health again compelled him to leave Baltimore, but after an absence of a year he returned to that city, resuming his place in the Peabody Orchestra, and continuing with that organization for three winters. In 1877 a small volume of his poems appeared from the press of the Lippincotts. It was dedicated in some charming verses to Charlotte Cushman. The volume contained "Corn," "The Symphony," "The Psalm of the West," and a few miscellaneous poems.

During this period he also delivered a series of private lectures on the poetry of the Eliza-

bethan era, and a course of lectures on Shakespeare. In 1879 he was appointed lecturer in English literature at the Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, a position which opened to him the prospect of a brilliant and useful career, with the assurance of a comfortable salary. During the preceding summer he wrote his "Science of English Verse," an elaborate, scholarly, and original treatise on that subject, presenting Lanier's peculiar ideas concerning the technique of English versification, and which he has illustrated with striking and beautiful effect in the poetry which marks the high tide of his genius.

His constantly increasing sickness frequently prostrated him, yet despite this affliction he would rally himself and continue his exacting labors as a musician and as a lecturer at the University. Some of his lectures were published in book-form under the title of "The English Novel." In addition to these works he wrote and published a volume descriptive of the scenery, climate, and history of Florida, and also edited in a charming manner three illustrated books for boys, putting into modern form and diction some of the classic chronicles, tales, and ballads of ancient chivalry.

In the summer of 1881 he went to the mountain region of North Carolina, where he tried camp-life for a few months, but found no relief from his sufferings. On the seventh day of the

following September he died, in the thirty-ninth year of his age. In 1885 his complete poetical works, edited by his wife, and with an excellent memorial written by William Hayes Ward, was issued from the press of Charles Scribner's Sons, New York.

When the spirit of Sidney Lanier left its frail earthly tenement for that celestial home where dwell "the pure in heart who see God," his brother poet, Paul Hayne, wrote to me: "Lanier had so much work to do it does seem mysterious that he should have been suddenly called away; yet biography is full of just such cases. We dwell in a world of riddles, seeing through a glass darkly. One must either trust in a higher power unquestioningly, or simply despair. For my part I prefer to trust."

Those who have made a study of the work which Lanier was permitted to do and which testifies to the excellence of his art, and justifies his claim to literary immortality, will sincerely unite in the regret expressed by the elder poet, who himself, only five years later, was called from labor to rest.

Though Lanier's work was fragmentary and his collected poems form but a small volume, yet he displays such luminousness of inspiration, such perfection of artistic skill, such refinement and culture, and taste, such depth and tenderness of feeling, such rare originality, and exquisite melodiousness, as amply to merit the

statement made by one of the most prominent London reviews concerning him. "Lanier," says the reviewer, "died so early that he really did not show us more than the bud of his genius, but if he had lived ten years longer he would, we believe, have ranked high among English poets and probably above every American poet of the past." This is high but well-deserved praise.

Sidney Lanier was the Chevalier Bayard of American literary men. A purer, gentler, nobler spirit never existed on earth, and this spirit he wrote into his poetry. The very fineness and ethereality of his verse, its delicacy, spirituality and delicious musical qualities, are the main reasons why Lanier's poetry is not popular in the commonly accepted meaning of that word. A highly cultivated talent for the appreciation of poetry and music is requisite for the full and satisfying comprehension and enjoyment of Lanier's poetry.

Intellectually and morally he abhorred whatsoever is base, common, sordid, or merely conventional. He especially despised the mercenary, cold, and narrow spirit of the times, and the smug, mean commonplaceness of the world. His purpose was to elevate the souls of men into loftier and purer regions of thought and aspiration. His splendid poem "The Symphony" is full of strenuous, virile, and melodious protests against the withering and deadening influences

of the sordid aims and actions of men, and the groveling mercantile methods of the age. He begins this noble strain with the exclamation:

"O Trade! O Trade! would thou wert dead!
The age needs heart—'tis tired of head,"

and he ends with a sublime apostrophe to the beauty and power of love.

In this poem each instrument of the orchestra, in turn, takes up the sweet but manly protests urged against the barren, selfish, and brutalizing influences of the maddening greed for money, and against the octopus power of trade, to strangle the nobler aspirations of the soul, and to destroy the tender and generous sympathies and affections of the heart.

The violins, assisted by all the mightier strings, enter the arena of song to defend and champion love and art. Having pleaded passionately for a cessation of the strangling methods of the fierce spirit of trade, and for relief from the deadly pressure of it upon the throats of the helpless poor, the stringed instruments sink at last

"to gentle throbbing
Of long chords change-marked with sobbing—
Motherly sobbing, not distinctlier heard
Than half wing-openings of the sleeping bird,
Some dream of danger to her young had stirred."

(By the way, can there be found in our literature anything more perfect, more wonderfully

delicate and ethereal, than the lines I have just quoted?)

Presently upon the tranquil surface of the melody of the strings,

"A velvet flute-note fell down pleasantly
Upon the bosom of that harmony,
And sailed and sailed incessantly,
As if a petal from a wild-rose blown
Had fluttered down upon that pool of tone,
And boat-wise dropped upon the convex side,
And floated down the glassy tide,
And clarified and glorified
The solemn spaces where the shadows bide.
From the warm concave of that fluted note
Somewhat half song, half odor forth did float,
As if a rose might somehow be a throat;"

and the flute takes up the melodious contest with the declaration that

"Man's love ascends
To finer and diviner ends,
Than man's mere thought e'er comprehends,"

and then the flute demands of Science:

"Whence and why
Man's tender pain, man's inward cry
When he doth gaze on earth and sky?"

The flute then describes the various voices of nature which it utters, and of which it claims to be the interpreter. These passages of the flute-song contain brilliant jewels of poetry, flashing and shining with the pure light of imagination. They strain our sense of the beautiful to the utmost limit.

When the flute-voice has ceased, the clarionet, representing the reed instruments, takes up the strain in the melting tones:

"A lady sings while yet
Her eyes with salty tears are wet."

In this personification the clarionet speaks of

"What shameful ways have women trod
At beckoning of trade's golden rod,"

and of the misery which follows the traffic in hearts for gold; and the poet exclaims:

"If men loved larger, larger were our lives,
And wooed they nobler, won they nobler wives."

Then the bold, straightforward horn thrusts itself into the musical battle in behalf of the clarionet-voiced lady, who bemoans the sad condition of love under the cruel and destructive despotism of heartless Trade. A bold, brave song of manly scorn and of loyalty to truth and love rings in this heartsome voice. It is a burning, withering arraignment and denunciation of many of the social crimes of the day. The poet's keen blade pierces the shams and shames which disgrace and corrupt the times, and the disgusting skeleton is pilloried in the sight of the whole world. "Is the day of chivalry dead?" cries the poet:

"Is Honor gone into his grave?
Hath faith become a caitiff knave,
And selfhood turned into a slave,
To work in mammon's cave?

For aye shall name and fame be sold,
And place be hugged, be hugged for the sake of gold,
And smirch-robed justice feebly scold
At crime all money-bold!
Shall woman scorch for a single sin,
That her betrayer can revel in,
And she be burnt, and he but grin
When that the flames begin?
Shall ne'er prevail the woman's plea:
We maids would far, far whiter be
If that our eyes might sometimes see
Men maids in purity!"

Proclaiming his faith in God, and in the triumph of the True, and announcing his determination to fight on for true love, the "knightly horn" ceases, and the hautboy, singing like any

"large-eyed child
Cool hearted and undefiled,"

takes up the fight against the truth and love and honor destroying spirit of Trade, and then the ancient wise bassoons are heard mingling their voices with the sea-like sound of the instruments, and the symphony concludes with the chanting of the bassoon voices, the poet figuring Life as a "sea-fugue, writ from East to West," whose dissolving score, harsh half-phrasings, and double erasings Love alone can make perfect. Love alone the "sole music-master blessed," can read "Life's weltering palimpsest:"

"To follow Time's dying melodies through,
And never to lose the old in the new,
And ever to solve the discords true—
Love alone can do.

And ever Love hears the poor folks' crying,
And ever Love hears the women's sighing,
And ever sweet knighthood's death defying,
And ever wise childhood's deep implying,
But never a trader's glozing and lying.
And yet shall Love himself be heard,
Though long deferred, though long deferred:
O'er the modern waste a dove hath whirred—
Music is Love in search of a word."

All of Lanier's life was a beautiful poem. His heart like an Æolian harp responded in music to every wind of fortune, whether it blew as a zephyr from Hesperian gardens or as a blast from the storm-clouds of adversity. He sang like a nightingale, though the thorn was rankling in his breast. In song he sought respite from his sufferings, and in sweet communion with nature found hope and peace and happiness.

Even while the hand of Death lay heavily upon him, the divine strength of his nature asserted itself. As he was lying in his rude camp on a mountainside in North Carolina, whither, accompanied by his faithful wife, he had gone as a last place of refuge against the assaults of the fatal disease which was consuming him, and while the herald-beams of the dawn were tenderly tipping the looming peaks with golden flames, we are told that he wrote with trembling hand on the back of an envelope the following lines:

"I was the earliest bird awake, I believe,
And, somehow, the mountain-tops did not hinder me,
And I was aware of the dawn,
Not by mine eyes, but by my heart."

O tender heart! O clairvoyant spirit! It was the symbol, the reflection of the dawn-light of eternity that thou didst see and feel, streaming from the opening gates of Paradise across the misty mountain-tops of Time!

Out of his ideal home-life Sidney Lanier largely drew the material for the ideals of his art, and in his wife and children he found much of the substance which served him for the woof and warp of his finest poetic works. These wholesome influences kept him serene in his darkest days of physical and mental suffering. They nerved him for the battle of life, cheered him in despondency, and made ample amends for all the acute pain which his sensitive soul was forced to endure from the "slings and arrows of outrageous fortune."

To him the word "home" had a peculiar meaning, to which he has given utterance in his novel:

"To make a home out of a household," he says, "given the raw material, to wit: wife, children, a friend or two, and a house, two other things are necessary—these are a good fire and good music; and inasmuch as we can do without the fire for half the year, I may say music is the one essential. Music means harmony, harmony means love, love means God."

In this description Lanier, in substance, gives expression to the beautiful thought of Emerson, when the poet-philosopher says: "Where the

heart is, there the Muses, there the gods sojourn, and not in any geography of fame. See to it only that thyself is here, and art and nature, hope and fate, friend and angels, and the Supreme Being shall not be absent from the chamber where thou sittest."

He never lost his faith in God and in his art. In his poetry and in his music—he was a master of both—he found comfort and consolation; this is attested by a passage in one of his letters to his father, in which he says:

"Think how for twenty years, through poverty, through pain, through weariness, through sickness, through the uncongenial atmosphere of a farcical college, and of a bare army, and then of an exacting business life, through the discouragements of being wholly unacquainted with literary people and literary ways—I say, think how in spite of all these depressing circumstances, and of a thousand more which I could enumerate, these two figures of Music and Poetry have steadily kept in my heart, so that I could not banish them. Does it not seem to you as to me that I begin to have the right to enroll myself among the devotees of these two sublime arts, after having followed them so long and so humbly and through so much bitterness?"

A gifted lady, now dead, a relative of the poet, in a monograph printed for private circulation, some years ago, pays an eloquent tribute

to Lanier's idyllic home-life, and speaks of the poet's devotion to his wife, and of the beautiful character of this accomplished woman.

She says: "The supreme charm of that home-life lay in his devotion to his wife, and hers for him. She married a penniless, misunderstood poet, already doomed with consumption, and through the terror and the pain of many long days, when she knew not where the bread could come from that was to feed her little children, she kept a hopeful outlook, and remained to the last her poet-lover's bright inspiration."

Affluently, completely did the poet repay the heroic devotion and constant love of this perfect wife. His poems are full of her. Witness that tenderest of love-songs, "My Springs"; and what a knightly strain is this:

"O sweet! I know not if thy heart my heart can greet,
I ask not if thy love my love can meet;
Whate'er thy worshipful soft tongue shall say,
I'll kiss thine answer, be it yea or nay;
I do but know I love thee, and I pray
To be thy knight until my dying day."

In his "June Dreams in January," which seems to have been written with his heart's blood, this profoundly pathetic passage occurs:

"Why can we poets dream us beauty so,
But cannot dream us bread? Why, now, can I
Make, aye create this fervid throbbing June
Out of the chill, chill matter of my soul,
Yet cannot make a poorest penny loaf
Out of this same chill matter, no, not one
For Mary, though she starve upon my breast?"

The crystal-pure nature of Lanier's love for his wife, as well as the beauty of his poetic art, is shown in the following lovely poem:

"MY SPRINGS.

"Always, when the large form of love
Is hid by storms that rage above,
I gaze on my two springs, and see
Love in its very verity.

"Always, when Faith with stifling stress
Of grief that died in bitterness,
I gaze in my two springs, and see
A faith that smiles immortally.

"Always, when Art with perverse wing,
Flies where I cannot hear him sing,
I gaze in my two springs, and see
A charm that brings him back to me.

"When labor faints and glory fails,
And coy reward in sighs exhales,
I gaze in my two springs, and see
Attainment full and heavenly.

"O Love! O Wife! thine eyes are they,
My springs, from out whose shining gray
Issue the sweet, celestial streams,
That feed my life's bright lake of dreams.

"Dear eyes, dear eyes, and rare complete,
Being heavenly sweet and earthly sweet,
I marvel that God made you mine,
For when He frowns, 'tis then ye shine."

In a letter to his wife, in which he endeavors to cheer her with his own brave heart and devout Christian philosophy, he writes:

"I will make to thee a little confession of faith telling thee, my dearer self, in words what I do not say to my not-so-dear self except in more modest feeling.

"Know, then, that disappointments were inevitable, and will still come until I have fought the battle which every great artist has had to fight since time began. This—dimly felt while I was doubtful of my own vocation and powers—is clear as the sun to me, now that I know through the fiercest tests of life, that I am in soul, and shall be in life and utterance, a great poet.

"The philosophy of my disappointments is that there is so much cleverness standing betwixt me and the public. Richard Wagner is sixty years old and older, and one-half of the most cultivated artists of the most cultivated art-land still think him an absurdity. Says Schumann in one of his letters: 'The publishers will not listen to me for a moment'; and dost thou not remember Schubert, and Richter, and John Keats, and a sweet host more?

"Now this is written because I sit here in my room daily, and picture thee picturing me worn and troubled or disheartened, and because I do not wish you to think up any groundless sorrow in thy soul. Of course, I have my keen sorrows, momentarily more keen than I would like any one to know, but I thank God, that in a knowledge of Him and of myself which cometh to me

daily in fresh revelations, I have a steadfast firmament of blue in which all clouds dissolve."

And so on, through all the struggles and disappointments, in darkness and in light, in "hope deferred which maketh the heart sick," unto the time when the clouds began to break and the morning sunshine of a brighter future illumined the pathway of the poet, alas! only to close suddenly in the gloom of death, this valiant, patient spirit toiled on in the service of the two arts to which he had consecrated himself, continuing to sing tender and charming songs, and to write noble poems breathing the essence of love aflame with the sacred fire of truth, and radiant with the serene glory of art. When the transient sunshine of prosperity began to fall upon his path, pitiful it was that this prosperity should have lasted but a year or two. He wrote to his dear ones in their distant Georgia home this exquisite invocation:

"O Sweet, my Sweet, to dream is power,
And I can dream thee bread and dream thee wine,
And I will dream thee robes and gems, dear Love,
To clothe thy holy loveliness withal;
And I will dream thee here to live by me,
Thee, and my little man thou holdest at breast;
Come name, come fame, and kiss my sweetheart's feet."

The pathetic story of this rare life closed in a manner becoming its beautiful theme. I quote again from the little memoir to which allusion has already been made; the writer says:

"But the unequal struggle for bread was not to continue long. Just as the public was beginning to appreciate his work, God silenced the flute-moan, and lifted the brave spirit into a region of happier melodies. For days, at the last, he seemed dying by inches, yet with perfect consciousness, and with the exaltation of those 'pure in heart who shall see God.' "

"Sunrise," his last and his grandest poem, was written when he was too weak even to raise his hand to his mouth. The poem was one of his series of "Hymns of the Marshes." This unfinished series includes "Sunrise," "Individuality," "Sunset," and the "Marshes of Glynn."

The poems of this series are suffused with the celestial light of genius. They are fragments of exquisite art and contain the quintessence of the poet's ideal life. The workmanship is perfect. They display a wealth of imagery, a power of imagination, a subtle sweetness of music and harmony of numbers, a profound philosophic insight into the mysterious language and portents of nature, and a knowledge of the deepest thoughts and intuitions of the human heart, unequaled in American poetry, and surpassed only by a few of the master-poets of the world.

Listen to the poet's invocation to the leaves, as he stands at sunrise in the marsh, holding spiritual converse with the live oak:

"The sweet burly-barked, man-bodied tree,"

which his arms are embracing in the prescient darkness that precedes sunrise:

"Ye lisperers, whisperers, singers in storms,
Ye consciences, murmuring faiths under forms,
Ye ministers, meet for each passion that grieves,
Friendly, sisterly, sweetheart leaves.
Oh, rain me down from your darks that contain me,
Wisdoms ye winnow from winds that pain me;
Sift down tremors of sweet-within-sweet,
That advise me of more than they bring—repeat
Me the woods-smell that swiftly but now brought breath
From the heaven-side bank of the river of Death—
Teach me the terms of silence—preach me
The passion of patience—sift me—impeach me—
And there, oh there,
As ye hang, with your myriad palms upturned in the air,
Pray me a myriad prayer."

And what a magnificent picture the poet paints for us, a little farther on, of the strange sights and sounds on the edge of the marsh, just as the premonitory signs of the coming dawn betray themselves to the poet's eyes and ears:

"The tide's at full; the marsh with flooded streams
Glimmers, a limpid labyrinth of dreams;
Each winding creek in grave entrancement lies,
A rhapsody of morning stars. The skies
Shine scant with one forked galaxy—
The marsh brags ten: looped on his breast they lie.

"Oh, what if a sound should be made!
Oh, what if a bound should be laid
To this bow-and-string tension of beauty and silence aspring,
To the bend of beauty, the bow, or the hold of silence, the string!
I fear me, I fear me yon dome of diaphanous gleam,
Will break as a bubble o'er-blown in a dream—

Yon dome of too-tenuous tissues of space and of night,
O'er-weighted with stars, over-freighted with light,
Over-sated with beauty and silence, will seem
But a bubble, that broke in a dream,
If a bound of degree to this grace be laid,
Or a sound or a motion made."

But the inevitable denouement of the majestic drama about to be enacted, and which the poet feels in his soul, develops itself rapidly. The sound and motion hinted at in the prophecy declared in the premonitions of dawn, begin to be audible and to stir:

"But no: it is made: list! somewhere—mystery, where?
In the leaves? In the air?
In my heart? is a motion made:
'Tis a motion of dawn, like a flicker of shade on shade.
In the leaves 'tis palpable; low, multitudinous stirring
Upwinds through the woods; the little ones, softly conferring,
Have settled my lord's to be looked for; so, they are still;
But the air and my heart and the earth are athrill—
And look, where the wild duck sails round the bend of the river,
And look, where a passionate shiver
Expectant, is bending the blades
Of the marsh-grass in serial shimmers and shades—
And invisible wings, fast fleeting, fast fleeting,
Are beating
The dark overhead as my heart beats—and, steady and free,
Is the ebb-tide flowing from marsh to sea—
Run home, little streams,
With your lapfuls of stars and dreams—
And a sailor, unseen, is hoisting a-peak,
For, list, down the inshore curve of the creek
How merrily flutters the sail—
And lo, in the East! Will the East unveil?

The East is unveiled, the East hath confessed
A flush: 'tis dead; 'tis alive; 'tis dead, ere the West
Was aware of it; nay, 'tis abiding, 'tis unwithdrawn:
Have a care, sweet Heaven! 'tis Dawn."

The well-known English critic, Le Gallienne, in an article wherein he discusses the merits of Lanier's poems, says of the "Marshes of Glynn":

"There are four hymns in all, but only two are of real importance, namely, 'Sunrise' and the 'Marshes of Glynn.' In fact, had he written all his other poems and missed writing these, striking, suggestive and fine lines as those other poems often are, he could hardly have been said to succeed in his high poetic ambition, as by these two poems, I think, he must be allowed to succeed. In the other poems you see many of the other qualities, perhaps all the qualities, which strike you in the hymns—the impassionate observation of nature, the Donne-like metaphysical fancy, the religious and somewhat mystic elevation of feeling, expressed often in terms of deep imaginative understanding of modern scientific conceptions; in fact, you find all save the important quality of that ecstasy which in 'The Glynns' fuses all into one splendid flame of adoration, upon the altar of the visible universe. The ecstasy of modern man as he stands and beholds the sunrise, or the coming of the stars, or any such superb elemental glory, has perhaps never been so keenly

translated into verse. Those who heard Lanier play remarked upon the strange violin effects which he conquered from the flute. Is it fanciful to feel that in these long, sweeping and heartbreakingly sensitive lines, Lanier equally cheated his father who, as we know, feared for him the fascination of the violin? It needs a long quotation, and even that may properly be inadequate, to illustrate what I mean. Lanier is often exquisite and lovingly learned in detail, but his verse is large in movement and needs room."

In person Lanier was the ideal poet. Tall and slender, graceful in his movements, dignified yet gentle in demeanor. His features were expressive and classic in outline, his eyes were clear, large and soulful, his voice was soft and musical, his presence attracted attention at once, and proclaimed him to be a man far above the common standard.

The first time I had the pleasure of meeting him was in Atlanta, and I was introduced to him by a mutual friend. He had stopped for a day in this city, while on his way to Macon from San Antonio, Texas, where he had spent a few months for his health. A musical and literary entertainment was to be given that night in one of the public halls for some charitable purpose. He had been invited to take part in the program. Together we left the hotel, and walked to the hall. He was introduced to the audience and

played in his usual masterly manner several beautiful airs on his flute. The audience was thrilled by the sweetness of his playing, and, in response to an insistent encore, he played the familiar air of "Home, Sweet Home," with lovely variations of his own.

When the entertainment was over we returned to the hotel. He invited me to his room. From a discursive conversation about literature, music, and art in general, we drifted into metaphysics—German metaphysics at that. I was amazed at his profound and intimate knowledge of that abstruse science and his familiarity with the writings of the great thinkers of Germany, whose works he had studied with all the ardor of his intensely warm and imaginative nature. He gave full play to his splendid faculties, and like the Theban eagle

> "Soaring with supreme dominion
> Through the azure depths of air,"

he touched the crests of the loftiest heights of philosophic thought. We "took no note of time," so profoundly absorbed were we in the discussion, and it was past three o'clock in the morning before we, reluctantly, parted. It was an ambrosial night, the recollection of which, coupled with the melodious voice and spirituelle face of him who long ago has joined "the choir invisible," lingers ineffaceably in my mind and in my heart.

It is not necessary here to enlarge upon the ethereal beauty, the philosophic insight, the pure moral purpose, the manly strength, the rich and variant music, the frequently almost inapprehensible spirituality of Lanier's best work. These qualities we find in "Corn," the poem which first made him famous, and fuller still in that lofty flight of his peculiar genius, "The Symphony," and that unique and most perfect cluster of all his poetic gems, the "Marshes of Glynn," in which he reveals to the highest degree his masterful knowledge of the subtlest mysteries, and his command of the rarest resources, of the divine art of poesy. The qualities which Baudelaire recognizes in Edgar Allan Poe, we also find in Sidney Lanier, namely, "The extra-terrestrial accent, the melancholy calm, the delicious solemnity, the precocious experience, I had almost said the inborn experience, which characterizes great poets."

In that supreme court in which such questions are finally adjudicated, the verdict has already been rendered, and this favorable verdict will stand the test of time. It is sufficient to say that Sidney Lanier wrote for immortality and accomplished his purpose.

A fine bronze bust of Lanier is in the Johns Hopkins University at Baltimore; another, a copy of the Baltimore bust, was presented to the city of Macon by Mr. Charles Lanier, a

cousin of the poet. Both memorials were publicly unveiled with interesting ceremonial exercises.

At Macon the ceremony took place on the 17th of October, 1890, and the poet's native city made a festival day of the event. The memorial poem written by Mr. William H. Hayne, of Augusta, one of Georgia's sweetest poets, is as follows:

"Unveil the noble brow, the deep-souled eyes,
Wherein melodious unities
Of music and of poetry were born,
For, undeterred by care's half sluggish thorn,
Barbed oft with suffering, he bravely brought
To song's full bloom his lyric buds of thought.

"Here Love and Homage shall alike proclaim
The undying whiteness of our poet's fame,
Wed to the marble, yet exempt from cold,
As winter's clouds blest by the sun's warm gold.

"And now I hear,
Far off yet clear,
Two voices that are one;
For, drawing close to music's feet,
'Tis thus her lyric sister sweet
Sings of their cherished son:

"Strong-winged and free, each word of me
Thrilled through his heart and brain;
His soul was lit by lights that flit
Across the waving grain;

"The marshes drear he made a prayer,
With words whose wondrous flight
Bore thoughts that reach through rhythmic speech
To sun-lands out of sight.

"He let no seed from Doubt's dark weed
Fall in the holy shrine,
Where Song was bred, by Music led
To beckoning heights divine;

"And seldom mute, his silver flute
Invoked with matchless art,
Each wave of sound by silence bound
Within her vestal heart.

"Death's arctic fear—'a cordial rare'
To his enraptured dream—
Came from the Blue his spirit knew,
Of Love and Faith supreme.

"His 'Sunrise Song,' with rapture strong,
Rose like a lark in light,
Who feels the sway of sovereign day
Reign o'er the mists of Night.

"He loved the flow of winds that blow
To 'odor-currents' set,
The gem-like hue of fleeting dew,
Frail rose and violet;

"The soul in trees, whose litanies
His reverent spirit heard,
The corn blade rife with vernal life,
The rune of bee or bird.

"Strong-winged and free, each word of me
Thrilled through his heart and brain,
His soul was lit by lights that flit
Across the waving grain;

"The marshes drear he made a prayer
With words whose wondrous flight
Bore thoughts that reach through rhythmic speech
To sun-lands out of sight."

Mr. Harry Stillwell Edwards contributed the following tender lines:

"O, not for us who knew thee, thou dear immortal!
Lifts now the veil from this thy sculptured wraith;
Love long has watched thy shrine, and o'er its portal
Burns his bright torch and hangs the star of faith;
When that clear flame fades into blackened ember,
And in the new white morn the fair Faith-star is set,
When we the beauty of thy holiness forget,
Then Art may teach the frail heart to remember;
Nor need to teach it then while, far and free,
Thy music wanders o'er the boundless sea.
Yield to the stranger-lovers, then, yon sad presentment,
That dims our sight with the unfallen tear;
Smiles ever by our hearts' firesides, in sweet contentment,
The tender face of our own lost Lanier."

In a charming quatrain written for the occasion by John B. Tabb, he describes Lanier's spirit as

"A spirit like the marshes large and wide,
All flooded o'er with mystic harmonies
Of sunrise, and the swelling of the tide,
Or 'grave entrancement' of the evening skies."

President D. C. Gilman, of the Johns Hopkins University, in his letter to the committee says:

"The friends of Sidney Lanier in Baltimore have been very glad to hear that a likeness of the poet has been placed in the public library of his native city. You are to be congratulated on having a replica of the bust that we have here. Every time that I look at it I am re-

minded of his chivalric bearing, of his persuasive voice, of his lofty ideals, and every time I open the pages of his poems I regret that a life which accomplished much and promised more, was brought to its close so soon.

"We need not concern ourselves with respect to the life of his poetry—that takes care of itself; but it is well to endeavor to perpetuate the unusual characteristics of the man and to keep in mind the native of Georgia who, amid all the discouragement which came from ill-health and all the change which the war involved, was constantly striving for the noblest and best. His name is among the names most honored in the annals of this University. 'Aspiro dum aspiro' is the motto which has been placed upon the memorial tablet that here bears his name. It is the record of his latter years."

Letters of sincere appreciation were received and read from noted authors in all parts of the country, and Charles G. D. Roberts, the poet, speaking for Canada, writes:

"I have counted it one of my chief delights that I may have been able to hasten a little here in Canada the proper recognition of his genius. There is a personal element in Lanier's poetry which makes intenser appeal to me than that of any other American poet but Emerson. Aside from this consideration, I cannot but think that Lanier was, potentially at least, one of the three or four masters of American song. It seems to

me that he reached heights of insight and lyric fervor which have been surpassed by no other poet of America. His work, moreover, like that of two other poets very dissimilar to him and to each other, Poe and Emerson, is stamped with that individuality of structure, that insistent originality of cadence most apt to impress the art of succeeding singers. His place is already lofty and secure, and his influence, which makes for all that is ideal in song, will continue its advance in ever-widening circles."

The chief address of the late Hon. W. B. Hill, Chancellor of the University of Georgia, was eloquent and masterly in subject and diction. So beautifully does it describe for us the nobility of Lanier's life, and the classic excellence of his poetry, that I cannot resist the desire to reproduce the address in full:

"Sidney Lanier sings the psalm of his own life in the 'Song of the Chattahoochee.' Pure was that life as the mountain stream that in his native Georgia flows

> " 'Out of the hills of Habersham,
> Down the valley of Hall.'

Manifold hindrances uprose at every step to deflect or bar his course, set toward poetry as the mountain brook was set toward the sea. He was held in thrall to the narrow channel of his early life by the languor of wasting disease, and by the presence in his "home-fond heart" of

family care. Bread for wife and children could be earned in the uncongenial toil of a lawyer's office, at the sacrifice of the destiny which throbbed within him. Only a strong faith could prophesy that the manna could fall from those larger heavens whose atmosphere his spirit craved as its vital air. Listen how in the allegory of the song we hear these alluring appeals:

"'All down the hills of Habersham,
All through the valleys of Hall,
The rushes cried abide, abide,
The wilful water-weeds held me thrall;
The laving laurel turned my tide,
The ferns and the fondling grass said, stay;
The dewberry dipped for to work delay,
And the little seed sighed, abide, abide,
Here in the hills of Habersham,
Here in the valleys of Hall.'

"But no! the arid waste of a time parched with the eagerness of its own greed, the drooping flowers of beauty and love and holiness, the sea of song stretching its sympathies around the hard prosaic of human life, all need and sorely need, the pure and quickening message which strives within him to find vent.

"'Duty whispers low, thou must.' Besides the time is short, and so listen how the stream asserts its strenuous outgoing mission:

"'But oh, not the hills of Habersham,
And oh, not the valleys of Hall,
Avail: I am fain for to water the plain,
Downward the voices of duty call,
Downward to toil and be mixed with the main;

The dry fields burn and the mills are to turn,
And the myriad of flowers mortally yearn,
And the lordly main from beyond the plain
Calls o'er the hills of Habersham,
Calls through the valleys of Hall.'

"It was said of some poet that he will go down to posterity with a small book under his arm. The same is true of Lanier. But in the growing accumulations of literature that threaten to submerge us under books, books, books, a title to immortality will more surely rest on a few fine creations than on a ponderous set of works. Let us ask, then, what are the qualities that distinguish Lanier's poetry and life, and for which he will be remembered:

"(1) Lanier is the type in a nineteenth century way of the union of musical and poetic functions in the old-time bard or minstrel. The real significance of the connection of his musical genius with his poetic art lies not so much in the mere skill in metrical forms, as in the enrichment of his poetic inspirations. To his musical culture he was also indebted for his 'Theory of the science of verse'—an attempt to find scientific basis in the physical laws of music for the laws of rhythm and poetical expression.

"Most strikingly this rare conjunction of poetic gifts enabled him to surpass other poets in the description of sounds; not, perhaps, in the description of the sounds of voluble bells, and lowing herds, and surging seas, but the sounds which, as George Eliot says, 'Lie upon the other

side of silence.' 'He could hear the squirrel's heart beat.' If to other poets it has been given to behold the light that never was on land or sea, to him it was given to hear voices in the depths of woods, and the brooding of the marshes which no ear but his had ever caught. To his quickened hearing the indistinguishable vibrations of the wings of bees made 'loud fanfare.' The rustling whispering of little green leaves awake him in 'Sunrise' from sleep. How exquisite this description from 'Corn':

> "'The copse depths into little noises start,
> That sound anon like beating of a heart,
> Anon like talk 'twixt lips not far apart.'

"(2) Lanier is the poet of a passionate purity. He is the laureate of the White Cross movement of a later time—the knightly order of Sir Galahads, whose strength is as the strength of ten, because their hearts are pure. Woman's protest against the burning injustice of a false public opinion, which man has established, was never more finely uttered than in the lines

> "'Must woman scorch for a single sin,
> Which her betrayer may revel in?'

"A French writer has lately said that the only receipt for creating interest in fiction is 'To smash the Ten Commandments,' but Lanier's genius shrank in moral recoil from the pollution

of this desperate and devilish device. To him belongs the unique honor of having written, in the fine poems called 'In Absence,' and 'Acknowledgment,' the only fitting response ever uttered by masculine lips to the wifely love which is glorified in Mrs. Browning's 'Sonnets from the Portuguese,' and in these fine poems, together with 'My Springs,' and 'Laus Mariæ,' we get glimpses of the idyllic marriage which the poet thought a rich compensation for all the other perfect gifts which Providence denied.

"(3) In an age of materialism he has sung the finer things of the spirit. To a generation rushing madly after wealth, hardly pausing for one moment around an open grave, making business a battle; wedging the poor

> "'Against an inward opening door
> That pressure tightens evermore,'

he sounds the cry

> "'Alas, for the poor to have some part
> In yon sweet living land of art,
> Makes problem not for head but heart."

"His song and his life are a splendid lesson for this needy time—the lesson that to be and to know are greater things than to get and to have.

"(4) He has enriched poetry with the revelation of aspects of nature hitherto unsung. He was the first that ever burst into that silent sea

> "'The length and the breadth and the sweep of the marshes of Glynn.'

He was the first who has sung in lasting melody the waving of the corn. His heart was as open to all of Nature's revelations as the morning-glory to the sun. A mere glance at the titles of the poems will show how many objects touched the springs of affection within him. Wherever he went, Tampa, Brunswick, Chester, he 'carried starry stuff about his wings,' and has enriched his temporary homes with the pollen of his songs. The 'peddler bee,' the 'gospeling glooms of live oaks,' 'the marsh plants thirsty-cupped for rain,' 'the myriad-prayer' of leaves 'with palms upturned in air,' the mocking-bird, 'trim Shakespeare on the tree,' who 'summed the woods in song.' These are but few of the rare felicities of phrase which glow through all the little green gilt volume of poems, like the globes of gold that on a 'Florida Sunday' studded bright the green heavens of the orange groves.

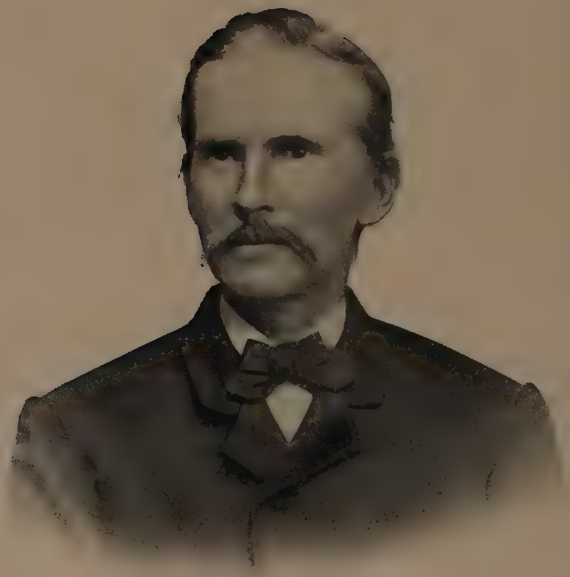
"(5) The story of his life is a heritage of all time. The undaunted faith, that in the face of all practical discouragements bade him take flute and pen for sword and staff, and give his allegiance to the twin arts he had so long worshiped. The manly and uncomplaining struggle with poverty and unrecognition. The almost airy heroism with which he looked Death in the eye, calling it

> "'The rich stirrup-cup of time,'

that should send him glad on his journey to the undiscovered country. All this is a record that the world will not willingly let die.

" 'The idea of his life shall sweetly creep into men's study of imagination.'

"Summing up all these qualities, and thinking of others that cannot now be named, it is not too much to say, in words which I quote from Chief Justice Bleckley, himself a poet: 'His fame which is now a mere germ, may one day grow to be a tall cedar in the poetic Lebanon.' "



Faithfully,
Paul H. Hayne.

FACING PAGE 55

PAUL HAMILTON HAYNE

The mocking-bird, who leads our woodland choir,
Taught thee the secrets of the minstrel's skill—
The power to move the hearts of men at will,
To soothe the soul, to rouse, and to inspire;
Thou "wakest to ecstasy the living lyre,"
With the same exquisite and passionate trill,
Wherewith our matchless bird is wont to thrill
The listening woods, while voicing Love's desire.
Nature's warm mother-heart throbs close to thine,
She keeps no secret from thine eye or ear;
The sky, the sea, the seasons' changeful moods,
In thy translucent verse reflected shine;
Of all who love her, she holds none more dear
Than thee, her hermit-minstrel of the woods.

Paul Hamilton Hayne, whose poetical works occupy a conspicuous place in American literature, and who deservedly ranks with the most distinguished of our native poets, was born in Charleston, South Carolina, January 1, 1830. He was the scion of a noble family. The names of some of his ancestors are intimately connected with many of the most interesting events in the history of our country. Some of them shed their blood during the Revolution, and were martyrs in the cause of American independence. Others, in more recent times, won honor and renown as soldiers, statesmen, and orators. Notable among the latter was the

poet's uncle, Robert Y. Hayne, Governor of South Carolina, whose memorable contest with the mighty Webster, of Massachusetts, in the Senate of the United States, fills one of the most brilliant chapters in the annals of our National legislature.

The poet's father was an officer in the United States Navy, and died at sea during his son's infancy. The poet's mother was a member of a distinguished South Carolina family, and a lady of many excellent traits of character. Hayne was educated in his native city and graduated with honors from Charleston College. Possessing all the advantages which wealth, high social position and unusually brilliant intellectual gifts could bestow, his future appeared to be a prospect of cloudless happiness. His genius manifested itself at an early age, and he soon became one of the brightest stars of that galaxy of intellect, culture, and taste which included such names as John C. Calhoun, Legaré, Timrod, William Gilmore Simms, and others. He was one of the founders and the editor of *Russell's Magazine,* at Charleston, and contributed to a number of the prominent literary periodicals of the day. In 1852 he married Miss Mary Middleton Michel, a beautiful and highly accomplished lady of Charleston, the daughter of one of the most eminent physicians and surgeons of that city. His first volume of poems was published in Boston in 1855, a

second volume was published in Charleston in 1857, and a third volume was published in Boston in 1860.

When the war between the States began he served on the staff of Governor Pickens, of South Carolina. During the bombardment of Charleston, Mr. Hayne's beautiful home, and his large library, with many valuable heirlooms, were destroyed by fire. At the close of the war, with a few fragments saved from the wreck of his fortune, he retired to an isolated place in the "pine barrens," in the vicinity of Grovetown, Georgia, sixteen miles from Augusta. Here he resided with his family until his death. The place is called "Copse Hill," and the rudely constructed little cottage, which was his home and literary workshop for over eighteen years, has become a famous spot, hallowed by the glorifying glamour of Genius.

In a charming sonnet entitled "The Cottage On The Hill," he has described his humble home and its surroundings. In this secluded spot, far from the mad whirl and tumult of the world, with his devoted wife and gifted son always near him, he, with indomitable spirit, unwavering trust in God, and in close communion with nature, fought uncomplainingly the terrible battle of life. Keeping his armor bright and his sword unstained, he "fought the good fight of faith," overcoming apparently insuperable obstacles, and in spite of severe

trials and keen disappointments, winning victory at last, and a crown of unfading laurels.

His heroic spirit, his serene reliance upon the goodness of God, and his faith in the ultimate triumph of a strong, self-reliant soul over all the misfortunes of life, are eloquently expressed in his noble poem entitled "Lyric of Action." By the way, a very pathetic story is connected with this poem. A young man living in New York, driven to despair by a series of misfortunes, determined to end his troubles by committing suicide. He had completed all his arrangements to do the terrible deed, when accidentally, while looking over some private papers, he came across a clipping from a newspaper containing this poem. The young man read it through. It struck a chord in his heart, the music of which thrilled him like the silvery tones of trumpets that awaken a sleeping army, and call it to prepare for battle. A change came over the dark and hopeless spirit of his dream; the clouds rolled away from his brain, and the sunshine of a new and brighter life suddenly quickened his soul. He determined, then and there, to turn over a new leaf in his history, to cease brooding over the past, to stop playing the coward, and to face the world and the future like a brave man should. He prospered, and several years afterwards this stranger wrote a very touching letter to the poet, detailing the circumstances just mentioned. With grateful

heart he thanked him for having written the poem which was the means, under God, of saving him from a suicide's grave. No event in his life touched Mr. Hayne more deeply than this, and whenever he mentioned it, he showed how profoundly his feelings were affected by it.

His "Legends and Lyrics" appeared in 1872. This volume contains the powerful and brilliant poem called "Cambyses and the Macrobian Bow," which he himself considered one of his very best. Mrs. Hayne told me that it was his favorite among all the poems of that class which he had written. It is a dramatic poem of sustained strength, rich in oriental coloring and vital with the varying play of passion.

King Cambyses, surrounded by his courtiers, is reclining in luxurious ease, under the plane trees. One of his courtiers, talking to his comrades, is extolling the matchless skill of a famous Bactrian archer in bow-craft. The King, who had the reputation of being the mightiest archer in his realm, grows hot with envy as he listens to the recital of his rival's powers as an archer. Rising from his couch and addressing Prexaspes, the speaker, the King, pointing toward the south, says:

> "Seest thou, Prexaspes, yonder slender palm,
> A mere wan shadow, quivering in the light,
> Topped by a ghastly leaf-crown?"

and then asks him whether he thinks the famous Bactrian, standing here, could with his shaft

pierce a spot as large as a hand marked upon it. The courtier answers that such a feat would be beyond mortal skill. The King asks Prexaspes whether he thinks that he, Cambyses, would also fail. The trembling courtier, feeling a presentiment of coming evil, cautiously intimates his doubt, and, craving the King's pardon, adds:

> "But yester eve, amid the feast and dance,
> Thou tarried'st with the beakers overlong."

The King's eyes flashed with hate and anger. He singles out one of his pages, a beautiful boy, the son of Prexaspes, and orders the father to bind the boy to the palm tree. Then he commands Prexaspes to fetch him the Macrobian bow.

The child is fastened to the tree, and Cambyses takes the bow.

> "Slowly, sternly up
> He reared it to the level of his sight,
> Reared, and bent back its oaken massiveness,
> Till the vast muscles, tough as grape vines, bulged
> From naked arm and shoulder, and the horns
> Of the fierce weapon groaning, almost met."

Casting a look of malignant hate at the trembling satrap, the King coolly says:

> "Prexaspes, look, my aim is at the heart!"

The bolt flies and strikes its living mark. The body of the child sinks quivering. The King,

clapping his hand on the shoulder of Prexaspes, exclaims gleefully:

"Go thou, and tell me how that shaft hath sped."

The wretched father creeps step by step toward his dead child. Cambyses, half-scornfully and half-indifferently, leans upon his bow. The father returns;

"The old man's face was riven and white as death."

Making meek obeisance to the King,

"He smiled (oh, *such* a smile!) and feebly said:
'What am I, mighty Master, what am I,
That I durst question my lord's strength and skill?
His arrows are like arrows of the god,
Egyptian Horus,—and for proof,—but now,
I felt a child's heart (once a child was *mine*,
'Tis my lord's now and Death's) all mute and still,
Pierced by his shaft, and cloven, ye gods! in twain!'"

The King answers with a loud laugh, and when his hideous merriment is over, he says:

"'Thou art forgiven,' said he, 'forgiven, old man;
Only, when next these Persian dogs shall call
Cambyses drunkard, rise, Prexaspes, rise!
And tell them how, and to what purpose once,
Once, on a morn which followed hot and wan
A night of monstrous revel and debauch,
Cambyses bent his huge Macrobian bow.'"

In 1873 Mr. Hayne edited the collected poems of his friend Henry Timrod, adding an interesting sketch of this unfortunate poet's life. His tribute to his friend's genius is exquisitely

tender, graceful, and sympathetic. In 1875 Mr. Hayne published another book of poems, which embraced his fine narrative poem "The Mountain of the Lovers." His complete Poetical Works were issued from the press of Lothrop & Co., Boston, in 1882, in a large and elegant volume, with numerous fine illustrations. The charming biographical sketch of the author in this volume was written by Mrs. Margaret J. Preston, of Virginia. However, a number of his most beautiful poems were written after the publication of this sumptuous volume, for instance the "Savannah Sesqui-Centennial Ode," the "Ode for the Charleston Centennial Celebration," and many notable minor poems and lyrics. In the Charleston Centennial Ode, Hayne pays the following pathetic tribute to his beautiful native city:

"O, City of my Father's love! beside whose streamlets straying,
My boyish feet, to jocund tunes, have gone so oft 'a-Maying';
O, City of ancestral graves! each clod a sacred treasure—
What marvel that one mournful chord wails through this dying measure?
The sea-songs come, the sea-songs go across thine ocean reaches,
The sea-tides ebb, the sea-tides flow far up thy glittering beaches;
Not mine to draw a new-born hope from waves so brightly glowing,
Not mine to hear in deep'ning winds a trump of onset blowing!

Ah! no! across the flow, half-welcome, half-appalling,
I catch the voices of the dead from twilight verges calling;
The shadows grow more gray that shroud this strange outworn existence.

"Quaint city of my youth, farewell! no more these eyes may quiver,
Dazed by the glint of surf and sail on flickering bar or river,
No more these weary limbs may own the soul's imperious order,
To bear me where the sun-caps flash beyond the billowy border!
Brave city of my youth, farewell! when safe from midday riot,
Kissed by the slumberous star that sways her lotus-land of quiet,
I shall see through half-closed lids thy moonlight beauty beaming,
And hear St. Michael's bells swoon down the tides of dreaming!"

The opening lines of his Sesqui-Centennial Ode, written for the celebration of the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the founding of Savannah, by Oglethorpe, are in the poet's best vein, and strike the keynote of a masterly production:

"Man clings, we know, to his ancestral clods;
Yet are there those who tower like potent gods
Above their brethren, on whose brows the sign
Of some star-blazoned splendor burns divine!

"In whom the harshness of an earthly leaven,
Is softened by the mystic balm of heaven;—
Whose epic fates through broad, deep currents roll,
Urged by the impulse of a steadfast soul,
Toward some grand Purpose and beneficent goal;

Souls with a large look southward, and benign,
Their lives harmonious held in golden tune
With Duty's keynote sounding down the bars
Of the high-ordered music of the stars;
Forever open to the liberal noon
Of God, of Nature, of Humanity!

"Ah, such was he
In whose wise mind the seed
Of a great Thought lay ripening into Deed,
Slowly developed through long, toilful years,
Nurtured by blood and sanctified by tears,
Clear blood, heroic tears that left no trace
Of hopeless anguish on the weeper's face;
Until there waved from changeful hour to hour,
The spotless petals of a perfect flower;
Rife with all beauty, flushed by power and health,
This Rose of States, our Georgian commonwealth."

One of his last was that remarkably serene and touching poem entitled "Face to Face," which appeared in *Harper's Magazine*, only a few weeks before his death, July 6, 1886.

The following poem in memory of Richard Grant White, the distinguished Shakespearian scholar, is a fine example of the poet's commemorative verse:

"His voice I had not heard, or seen his face,
Yet have I marked all features of his mind—
Their stalwart frankness and their cultured grace—
And known what largess he has left mankind;
Wise thoughts, pure thoughts, a style as crystal clear
As the still waters of a Zetland mere.

"His genius, molded in a form unique,
(Which shuddered at the touch of 'Commonplace'),
Held in a fair wedlock, goldenly combined,
Modern forthrightness with a charm antique,
A strength all Saxon and a depth half Greek.

"And for the rest, he bore his spirit high,
Well-poised, serene, unwavering, even as one
Who, tho earth-bound, would rather front the sky,
And fiery blazon of the noonday sun
Than crouch in shades of cool humanity,
While the great Triumphs of the world sweep by.

"He kept the royal ermine of his pride
Stainless—for his that fast-decreasing clan,
Wherein the Sage and Scholar strives to lift
Above our reckless age's sordid drift—
Above his shallow scorn or furious ban—
Those courtly virtues only fools deride,
Which stamp the heaven-elected Gentleman.

"Well were his nature and his toils allied—
Large both and liberal!—'tis no marvel then,
He walked in such security of ease
Through Shakespeare's world of monarchs and great men—
A kingly Realm he loved and magnified.

"Ah! in that heavenly Country over seas—
We wot not of, all shadow-wreathed and dim—
I trust—(are not its mansions manifold?)—
I trust a happy Home remains for him,
Wherein the wise Grammarians born of old,
Scholars and Poets, and bright souls of mark,
Who starred the blackness of the ancient Dark,
May chorus welcome to the nightless lands—
And foremost there (upon his smiling face,
The softened sweetness of that sacred place),
His Master Shakespeare, with warm, outstretched hands!"

The poet's remains were buried in the old cemetery at Augusta, close to the spot which holds the ashes of Richard Henry Wilde, author of the famous lyric, "My Life Is Like a Summer Rose"; and now by his side rests the body of his beloved and faithful wife—insepa-

rable in life, inseparable in death. The poet's funeral was a memorable one. The whole city was in mourning. The people not only admired him as a poet, but also loved him as a man whose life illustrated the best qualities of the chivalrous race from which he sprang, for his heart was constantly animated by a passionate and insistent love for the true, the good, and the beautiful. A very touching feature of the funeral-day was the presence of several thousand children, who lined the streets as the sorrowful procession passed on its way to the cemetery. Their presence testified to their love for their distinguished friend, and verified the sweet sentiment of one of his own lines:

"The children loved him, so he sleeps in peace."

The lyre of every true poet breathes pure and tender music when he strikes its strings in praise of children, or in memory of the scenes, the images, the hopes and fears, the joys and fleeting sorrows of childhood's days. I am always tempted to weigh the worth of a poet's popularity, that is to say, the power he possesses to write himself into the hearts and homes of men, by the way in which he treats themes that concern childhood, or sings to or about children. I judge him by the spiritual insight he has of a child's soul; by the power with which he pictures the glow, the color, the ethereal light and shade of the mysterious world that shines

so serenely from the liquid depths of a child's eyes; for the light that beams from these eyes comes from a source much nearer to the star-lands of Peace and Love than is the source from whence we men and women of the world receive our spiritual illumination. Only a true and largely gifted poet can do this. It requires perfection of art; simplicity without barrenness, strength, finely proportioned with grace; perspicuity; originality of conception; thought sanctified by genuine emotion; in a word, it requires him to have the rare power that can send a noble thought from his heart straight into and through the heart of another, as an arrow speeds from the bow to the mark. Hayne had this excellence. He loved children, he revered them both for what they are and what they suggest—simplicity, purity, innocence, nearness to God, all the qualities the lack of whose blessed influence we so sorely feel as we become hardened and seared in the fierce struggle with the world, till, finally, the early fragrance and freshness of heart and soul have passed away, like the sweetness and beauty of a flower when the winds of winter have swept over it, and cast it from its stem. In the tender words of Whittier—himself a poet who has rightful claims to the rare laurels of a "child's poet"—

> "We need love's tender lessons taught,
> As only weakness can;
> God hath his small interpreters—
> The child must teach the man.

"We wander wide through evil years,
Our eyes of faith grow dim;
But he is freshest from his hands,
And nearest unto Him."

Yes, children are interpreters, teachers, and "of such is the Kingdom of Heaven." Fresh from God's hands, and so near to Him, why should they not teach us what we are all so apt to forget—love, gentleness, charity, sincerity, purity, faith. Do we ever realize how hard it is to break the faith of a child? Ought we not to become as one of these little ones? Could we ask a rarer gift from our Heavenly Father? It was in this spirit that Hayne's poems of and for children were written. Is it any wonder "the children loved him"? As an example of the grace and pathetic tenderness characteristic of Hayne's verse on themes devoted to the illustration of child-life, or personally dedicated, and which constitutes a very charming part of the poet's complete works, the following poem is reproduced here; it was addressed to my little daughter, some years before her death:

"A CHILD'S HOROSCOPE.

"To Ida M. Hubner, Atlanta, Georgia.

"What is it in her frank young face
Which, more than beauty, more than grace,
Holds in its warm and strong control
The instinctive homage of my soul?

"A spirit constant, faithful, high,
Shines deeply in her earnest eye,
And ah! her tranquil lips are fraught
With talismans of truthful thought!

"Child-woman! hath her morn too soon
Been touched by prophecies of noon?
For something sad, tho' scarce defined,
Girds the grave bastions of her mind;

"But, rippling thro' the outworks' fold,
Her life is still a stream of gold;
A stream that, with harmonious sound,
Shall force, some day, its narrow bound,

"And in its tide of stainless flame,
May mirror the clear stars of fame!
Dear child! the genius of your birth
Is winged by heaven, if wrought of earth;

"A Saxon steadfastness of will,
A bucklered heart to conquer ill;
A calm defiance turned on those,
Who, unprovoked, would be your foes;

"A temper brave, and unsubdued
By passion's fierce and fiery brood—
These heavenly charms shall vanquish strife,
And round with peace a noble life!

"Behold your horoscope! But now,
Darling! I kiss your lifted brow,
And feel your placid pulses rest
Sweetly, as on a father's breast!

"Your little hand you fold in mine,
And o'er us steals a calm divine,
Wherein the past and future fade!—
I only know, my loving maid,
Is here—(alas, that we must part!)—
Is here, clasped closely, heart to heart!"

Thirty of his poems for children are to be found in the complete edition of his poems (Lothrop & Co., Boston, 1882).

Six years after Hayne's death his faithful wife followed him into the realm of everlasting happiness. These intervening years were devoted by her to his memory, and to plans for the extension and perpetuation of his fame, and to motherly duties in behalf of an only child, their gifted son William. A nobler woman than Mrs. Hayne never lived. Her admiration for her distinguished husband amounted almost to worship. Never were two souls more completely blended, never did two hearts more truly "beat as one." She was the poet's guardian angel, his counsellor, his inspiration. Their married life was always an exquisitely sweet and tender love-song, sometimes swelling into the majestic music of an anthem rising far above the roar and riot of the world, sometimes it became a battle-hymn, ringing triumphantly amid the terrible conflict with adversity in its cruelest shapes, against which they were forced to battle for years. It is of her he sings in his "Love's Autumn."

I shall not attempt an elaborate criticism of the qualities of Mr. Hayne's genius, or endeavor to define his standing relative to other poets. In this connection the words of Mrs. Preston, with which she concludes her sketch of him, will be appropriate:

"It were superfluous to enter upon any criticism of his poems, nor is this the place for it. They are left with the reader who, if he cannot of himself find therein the aromatic freshness of the woods—the swaying incense of the Cathedral-like aisles of pines; the sough of dying summer winds; the glint of lovely pools, and the brooding notes of leaf-hidden mocking-birds—would not be able to discern them, however carefully the critic might point them out."

He was honored by the warm friendship and the candid admiration of some of the most famous literary men of Europe, and of our own country. Among his constant correspondents abroad were Charles Reade, Black, Mackey, Blackmore, Wilkie Collins, Marston, and Swinburne. Tennyson spoke of him as the finest sonnet-writer in America. Grimm, of Germany, praised him enthusiastically, and Victor Hugo placed him in the front rank of American poets. He enjoyed the friendship of Holmes, Stoddard, Whittier, and Longfellow, and occasionally was an honored guest in their homes.

In Hayne, indisputably, the man was the poet. His manhood was reflected in his poetry. Gentle, modest, refined, sensitive he was, but he was also brave as Cæsar. In morals, as in art, his standards were the highest, and he lived fully up to these. He was the friend of the poor and lowly, the champion of the oppressed. He never turned a beggar from his door, and

would share his last crust of bread with a hungry tramp. Though sometimes imposed upon, he would not allow his faith in humanity to be shaken thereby, and always had a good word to say in behalf of the most abject of his fellow-creatures.

In his art he was almost painfully sensitive to the obligations imposed upon him by his Creator, in bestowing upon him the sacred gift of Song, through which he interpreted the mysteries of Nature, and portrayed the heart and soul-life of his fellow-men. The strongest and most beautiful of all the fine qualities of his character was his Christian faith; his immovable trust in the Saviour of the world; his absolute belief in the immortality of the soul. His testimony as to the truth of these facts, while on his death-bed, was profoundly pathetic and eloquent. Among his last audible words was a message to his friend, the late Philip Bourke Marston, the blind English poet, who did not believe in the resurrection. Mr. Hayne whispered to his wife, "Give my love to Marston,—tell him to meet me there," feebly pointing his finger heavenward. "But he does not believe. Shall I tell him to believe in Christ, the Resurrection and the Life?" said Mrs. Hayne. With intense earnestness the dying poet replied, "Oh yes! Oh yes!"

I shall never forget this thrilling scene; nor can anything obliterate the impression which

his burning and inspired words made upon my heart as I sat by the bedside through the long, sorrowful hours of that last night of the poet's life on earth; and the memory of the days which I was privileged to spend at Copse Hill is a precious legacy to me.

Our correspondence extended over a period of nearly sixteen years. A few extracts from the poet's letters will, I trust, be found interesting. They will show his liberal spirit; his broad views of life and of men; his keen, polished intellect, and his high ideals as a poet and as a man. Speaking of his aims and motives in poetic work, he writes:

"The older I grow, the more truly I yearn to come near and to rouse the great heart of humanity—to elevate, comfort, and console the lives of my fellow-creatures. To illustrate the Beautiful, to sing of the Ideal in its loftiest phases—these are aims worthy of any poet; but to bind the broken heart, or stimulate the despondent spirit, or even to celebrate the triumphs of homely Toil (so that Toil shall be winged for future stronger efforts) are nobler achievements still."

Again he says:

"In literary immortality—except as materially modified in meaning—I have no faith. A few clarion names and golden threads of song, may truly survive for a long time, but their term

of existence must also arrive. Verily, as old Shirley hath it:

> "'Only the actions of the just
> Smell sweet, and blossom in the dust;'

and I am by no means certain, sometimes, whether even this holds good, except in its highest spiritual sense. How many a great and good man has gone to his grave, bedewed by a nation's tears—to be comparatively forgotten in a few decades."

On hearing of the death of Longfellow he paid this noble tribute to the poet's memory:

"The world loved that man, as few of our kind have ever been loved before; and the reason is obvious—Longfellow was, what not too many are nowadays, a genuine and perfect gentleman! Despite a fame which had spread over three-fourths of our globe; despite wealth, position, the flattery of unnumbered multitudes, often growing into adulation, he kept both the whiteness and the humility of his spirit, recognizing, like Tennyson, the comparative nothingness of mortal renown, and hearing always the 'roll,' the awful 'roll of ages.' And he was equally considerate to the humblest and loftiest of mankind."

Referring to the untimely death of Sidney Lanier, which affected him profoundly, and for whose splendid genius he had great admiration, he writes:

"He had so much work to do, it does seem mysterious that he should have been thus suddenly called away. Yet, biography is full of just such cases. We dwell in a world of riddles, 'seeing through a glass darkly.' One must either trust in a higher Power, unquestioningly, or simply despair! For my part, I prefer to trust."

In another letter occurs the following tender allusion to his noble wife:

"Indeed I should have been next to nothing without her, and there is not a day, nor an hour, wherein I fail to feel my own unworthiness by the side of her absolute unselfish goodness and elevation of character, and her devoted love."

Alluding to his constant physical suffering, he says, in a letter written many years ago:

"Yet, thanks to our merciful God, I have determination and vim sufficient to enable me to labor in my vocation, and in harness (intellectual harness, at all events) I shall die! My constant prayer is somewhat like that of the old Norseman, who beseeched Odin to save him from a 'cow's death'; i. e., the long suffering of the bed-ridden invalid. Nevertheless, God's will be done."

Toward the latter years of his life the feeling that his death would be sudden grew upon him constantly. He concludes a hurriedly written note to me as follows:

"I am a sick man, and mark my word, I will die some day suddenly. What matter? My work is finished in this world."

It was doubtless while in the shadow of moods like this that he wrote the touchingly sad yet lofty and serene lyric entitled "In Harbor."

Here is a bit of excellent criticism on an author who occupies a warm place in the hearts of all who admire pure morality and consecrated love, combined with genius—speaking of Miss Mitford he says:

"I, too, am very fond of her as an author, and I may add as a woman of unquestionable genius, and the noblest, pluckiest character. Do you know of anything in biography more admirable than her attitude toward her father? The tender, unselfish—one may say heroic—affection which caused her to surround one of the shallowest, vainest, most nauseously egotistical of men, with the glamour of profoundest admiration and loving sympathy, may be ridiculed by some as mere blind weakness, but to my mind, it was beautiful exceedingly, considered as the direct outcome of her own incomparable feminine sweetness and grace. Her letters, and the answers to them, in the volume you refer to, constitute a remarkably valuable series. Miss Mitford's critical instincts were generally correct, as witness her invariable and hearty appreciation of Walter Scott, and other

first-class writers; and yet, it is true that she blundered awfully sometimes—what could be more amazingly shallow, and a trifle impertinent, than her depreciation of Thackeray, especially of his chef d'œuvre, Esmond? Miss Mitford's verse has never struck me as possessing the qualities of perpetuity; but her 'Village' and prose-works of a similar scope, are worthy to rank with the ablest performances of that kind in our language."

The following philosophic reflection on the influence of domestic affinity is well worth studying, as it furnishes, perhaps, a partial answer to the question as to the cause of connubial discord, quite frequently found in the domestic history of some of the world's greatest geniuses:

"Ah, me," he writes, "how many a man of genius (especially esthetic genius) has been ruined by the lack of household help and understanding! I firmly believe that even Byron would have developed into quite another and a nobler character if his consort had been a different woman. She had excellent qualities, no doubt, but absolute Cimmerian darkness enveloped her mind, so far as her knowledge of Byron's nature and peculiar capabilities was concerned. For instance, she was densely, impenetrably stupid in regard to all display of humor or wit, and her husband was thus tempted to humbug her by all kinds of stories

about himself, his abnormal wickedness and tremendous depravity, examples of which (of course all untrue and invented on the spur of the moment) Madame implicitly believed, and forty years after poured into the ears of Mrs. Beecher Stowe."

His opinion of Aldrich's poetry is very candidly expressed:

"For Aldrich's art, indeed, I have the profoundest admiration. He is a model in this respect. There is a lamentable lack, however, in his poetry of the grander elements of emotion and passion. Seldom, if ever, do his lyrics take hold of the deeper strings of one's heart. Herein Lowell towers above him; so does Longfellow; so again do Whittier, Stoddard, and not a few others, yet Aldrich's self-knowledge, his unerring consciousness of his own limitations, seems in itself genius."

Bret Harte, as a poet, did not impress him favorably; he says:

"Bret Harte, no doubt, possesses a thin vein of genius; but it appears to me he has already nearly worked it out. His poems (the serious ones) are chiefly echoes, and, as for his humorous verse (the 'Heathen Chinee,' etc.) I think him absurdly overrated."

Speaking of Maurice Thompson's "Songs of Fair Weather," he says:

"I am familiar with Thompson's poetry, and consider it very true and admirable verse;

chiefly of the wholesome, outdoor, realistic sort; it is full of breezes and fragrant air, and the lusty revelry of wave and wind. On occasions he can be delicately imaginative and artistic, as witness his really exquisite poem 'Diana.'"

Of the South's most popular author, the ever delightful "Uncle Remus," admired by all the world—Joel Chandler Harris—he writes:

"I am heartily glad to hear of Harris's success. He richly deserves it. His genius, especially in the delineation of the negro character, is absolute. I predicted his success."

He calls Mrs. Margaret J. Preston the most gifted of the Southern female poets, and says:

"Her heart is as warm and cordial as her mind is comprehensive, brilliant, and creative. The South, I am sorry to admit, does not even begin to appreciate her genius, nor what she has done for her section in art."

He had an irrepressible longing to visit Europe, particularly England, and behold, face to face, his friends there. "The utter sunsetting of my last hope of ever going abroad," as he expressed it, depressed him greatly. "I thought this hope had died previously," he writes, "but I was mistaken. Only now has it given up its final breath, and the pang is bitter. Let me not complain, however. Fate seems to have determined that I shall die, as I have lived for a quarter of a century, among the solitudes of the Pine Barrens. I have endured many things —I can endure this."

But the solitudes of the Pine Barrens, to which Fate had exiled him, these apparently lonely regions, were, nevertheless, sources of spiritual delight to him, and under the transfiguring glamour of poesy were pictured by him as landscapes of enchanting loveliness; witness, for instance, his fine and picturesque poem descriptive of this very same wearisome waste, when illuminated by the glory of sunset; it is in his best vein and is called "In the Pine Barrens." This poem offers another illustration of the fact that there is something divinely powerful in "the imagination and the poet's dream," a power which can transform a monotonous waste into a paradise, and change even the commonest things, frequently, into "a thing of beauty and a joy forever."

He was exceedingly fond of profound scholastic studies. "At present," he writes, "I am studying certain rather advanced books upon a very old and favorite subject of mine—astronomy. What a topic! Growing in fascination as one advances deeper and deeper into the Cosmos. But the fascination becomes painful, nay, awful, at last. To confront the two infinites of Time and Space, is to make the soul reel upon its pedestal! Then, this earth of ours —which for ages man regarded with such enormous complacency as the center of Creation—turns out to be a miserable little hundreth-rate pigmy of a planet; a mere revolving mite, half

lost, it would seem, among the more majestic worlds. There are some startling questions in this connection touching Theology; but, mark you, the Omnipotent is also the Omnipresent. Physical dimensions are as nothing, possibly, in His eye.

"Where dwells the Eternal? Past Uranian heights,
All heights of grandeur, and all gulfs of gloom?
Yea! but He dwells no less where April lights
Dance round the daisy, and the jessamine bloom."

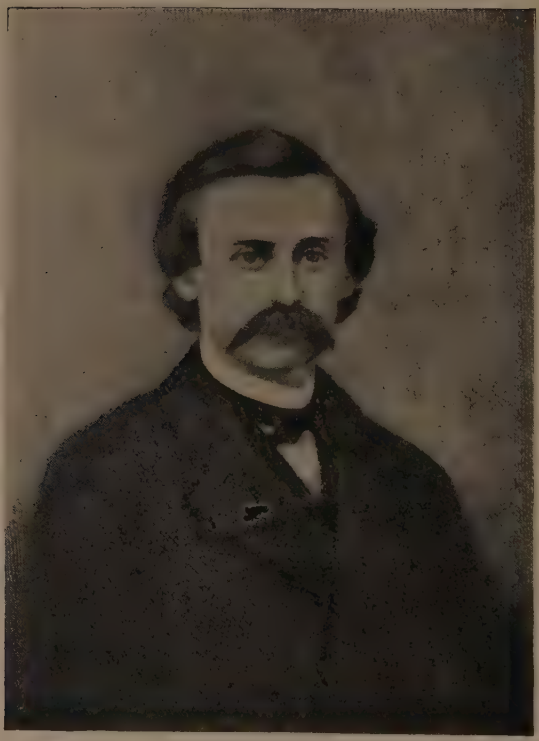
Some years ago the poet's gifted son, William Hayne, whose book of charming poems entitled "Sylvan Lyrics" has given him a conspicuous place among our native poets, in an interesting magazine article described his father's methods of composition; among other things he said:

"The poetic impulse frequently came to him so spontaneously as to demand immediate utterance, and he would turn to the fly-leaf of the book in hand, or on a neighboring shelf, and his pencil would soon record the lines, or fragments of lines, that claimed release from his brain."

I can bear witness to the truth of this statement. On one of my visits to Copse Hill, Mr. Hayne presented me with a copy of Swinburne's "Atalanta in Calydon," which the author had sent him from London. Some weeks afterward, while I was turning the leaves of the book, I found on the inside of the cover the first

drafts of one of Mr. Hayne's poems, written with a pencil. The many erasures, interlineations, and changes in words made the reading of the lines a very difficult matter. Evidently while the poet was walking to and fro in his little library, or under the trees, with this book in his hand, the inspiration came upon him, and with his pencil he rapidly jotted down and then hastily revised the first draught of one of his beautiful sonnets.

In the spring of 1889 the "Paul Hayne Memorial Chapel" was completed at Grovetown, and dedicated with appropriate ceremonies. The church is situated in a grove of pines, not far from Copse Hill. It was erected with funds contributed by friends and admirers of the poet in this country and in Europe. Certainly no American poet has had a more beautiful tribute paid to his memory, or one more deserved.



Gratefully yours
Henry Dennis

FACING PAGE 63

HENRY TIMROD

Poet! if still, where now thy spirit is,
Thou mayest be permitted to look back
Upon thine earth-life's brief, but thorny track,
So stained with blood-drops of thine agonies,
Methinks a glint of joy, not all unmeet
Even for the glory of thy heavenly state,
Thrills thee, to see the world at last, though late,
Laying her love-gift gladly at thy feet;
Yes, thou hast triumphed; happy soul! look down,
Behold, how thy life's sorrow-darkened days
Have turned to stars, that glorify thy grave,
And how, to pay for gifts thy genius gave,
Within this book, as in a shrine, men place
The rarest jewels of thy poet's crown.

(Written in a volume of the Memorial edition of Timrod's poems.)

Henry Timrod, whom Richard Henry Stoddard called "the ablest poet that the South had yet produced," and of whom Paul Hayne, in still ampler praise, said that he was "one of the truest and sweetest singers this country has given to the world," was born in Charleston, South Carolina, December 8, 1829. His father, William Henry Timrod, of German descent, was a highly esteemed citizen, noted for the excellence of his character and cultivated intellect. He was also a poet of ability, and some of his published poems won public favor; of his

"Ode to Time," Washington Irving said, "Tom Moore could have written no finer lyric." Evidently Henry inherited from his father, to some extent, his genius for poetry. His mother, of Scotch-Irish descent, was a woman of liberal culture, and most amiable character. She was passionately fond of Nature in all its moods and manifestations, and it was from her that the future singer received that sensitive taste for the beautiful, the love of the charm of out-door life, the ever-ready power to interpret and express the meaning, the mysterious suggestiveness of Nature, which distinguishes Timrod's poetry.

Timrod received his primary education in one of the best schools of his native city. One of his schoolmates was Paul Hamilton Hayne, who, as his intimate and life-long friend, gives testimony to Timrod's fine character, and to the brilliancy of his genius, in the memoir Paul Hayne wrote for the volume of Timrod's collected poems, published in 1873.

Timrod was a diligent and ambitious student, and when about seventeen years of age he entered the University of Georgia, at Athens. His poetical powers were exercised even then, especially in love-songs, which found their way into print chiefly through the columns of a Charleston journal.

Because of the inability of his father to support him longer at the University, and partly

on account of his delicate health, Timrod was forced to leave the University before he could graduate. He then began the study of law at Charleston, in the office of the distinguished jurist, James L. Pettigru, but soon found out that he was not fitted for a profession so uncongenial to him. He gave up his law studies, and became a teacher. His duties as a tutor in the family of a rich South Carolina planter gave him leisure to woo the poetic muse, and the contents of a fine library were also happily at his disposal. At intervals he would visit Charleston, where he had many warm friends, and a choice circle of congenial spirits were always delighted to have this gentle and richly gifted youth in their midst.

In *Russell's Magazine,* a distinctively Southern literary publication, which flourished for a short time in Charleston, at that period, appeared some of Timrod's best poems and sonnets. These and some other poems were finally collected into a small volume and published by Ticknor & Fields, of Boston, in 1860.

When the war between the States began he volunteered his services in defense of his State, but his enfeebled health prevented him from enduring the hardships of a soldier's life in the ranks, and he remained in Charleston during the first year of the war, busy, however, with his pen, writing poems and songs that fired the hearts of his countrymen by their fervid patriot-

ism and impassionate melody, thus, as has been aptly said, "Serving his country more effectually with the pen than he could have served her with the sword." He then became a war correspondent for the Charleston *Mercury*. Unable to stand the hard life of camps, he returned to Columbia, South Carolina, where he became editor of the *South Carolinian*. He was married in 1864 to Miss Katie Goodwin, a charming young English lady, whose picture, from its frame of jeweled words, and its background of a lovely rural English landscape, smiles out upon us in his beautiful idyl "Katie."

A son blessed the union of these two happy hearts, but lived only a few months. The blow nearly broke the heart of the poet. From that time on disaster "followed fast and faster," and to his domestic affliction and the constantly increasing physical debility—the insidious undermining of consumption—were added the culminating horrors of war. The Federal army was devastating the South. Columbia, the capital of South Carolina, utterly undefended, was taken and burned by order of General Sherman. When the simoon of disaster had passed over the doomed city its inhabitants were left to their fate, penniless, and wandering amid the smoking ruins of their homes, trying to save what they could from the wreck, with starvation staring them in the face daily. In common with his fellow-citizens, Timrod suf-

fered woefully. Nothing can more vividly describe the situation than the occasional letters he wrote to his friend Hayne. They are full of pathos and tears, and the grim humor which now and then flashes through the lines only adds to the sombreness and terror of the picture. In one of his letters he says:

"We have lived for a long period, and are still living, on the proceeds of the gradual sale of furniture and silver plate. We have—let me see—yes, we have eaten two silver pitchers, one or two dozen silver forks, several sofas, innumerable chairs, and a huge bedstead! In a forlorn hope I forwarded some poems to Northern periodicals, and in every instance they were coldly declined.

"As for supporting myself and large family —wife, mother, sister and nieces, by literary work—'tis utterly preposterous. Little Jack Horner who sang for his supper and got his plum-cake, was a far more lucky minstrel than I am. To confess the truth, my dear Paul, I not only feel that I can write no more verse, but I am perfectly indifferent to the fate of what I have already composed. I would consign every line of it to eternal oblivion for—one hundred dollars in hand."

In another letter he says:

"You ask me to tell you my story for the last year. I can embody it all in a few words: beggary, starvation, death, bitter grief, utter want of hope!"

It is but justice to say that the unfortunate poet still had many warm friends and neighbors, who did all they could to help him and to cheer him by their sympathy, sharing the few resources that were still left to them with him, and with kindness born of common calamity, nobly endured, made the declining days of the suffering and dying poet as bearable as possible.

With an occasional feeble effort to better his condition by suitable employment, which resulted only in temporary relief, and occasional brief visits to his friend Hayne, at Copse Hill, and trips to Charleston, the grim story draws to an end. His hemorrhages became more frequent, and he was soon confined to his bed. Recovery was impossible. He met the fateful messenger Death with resignation and the fortitude of a Christian. His loved ones waited tenderly by his bedside. In Hayne's memoir the last hours of the dying poet are touchingly described. To his sister he said:

"Do you remember that little poem of mine:

> "Somewhere on this earthly planet,
> In the dust of flowers to be,
> In the dew-drop, in the sunshine,
> Waits a solemn hour for me—

Now that hour, which then seemed so far away, has come. May I be able to say, thanks be to God who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

The prophecy contained in the poem came true. As the dawn-light of the eighth day of October, 1867, began to pour its rosy splendor into the room, the soul of the poet passed away, and the aching heart was at rest forever.

His remains were buried by the side of his infant son's, in Trinity churchyard, at Columbia. In the words of Paul Hayne:

"So now I leave him, high exalted, far
Beyond all memory of earth's guilt or guile;
Hark! 'tis his voice of cheer,
Dropping, methinks, from some mysterious star:
His face I see, and on his face—a smile!"

Timrod, as a true son of the South, naturally was her ardent eulogist, and the chivalric champion of her cause, in weal or woe. The poems and songs written by him during the civil war, can be matched but rarely in the effusions of his contemporary bards, and certainly none excel his in depth and fervor of feeling, in the high flight of fancy, and the bold, clarion-clear music of the vivid lines. To justify this assertion let me give here, for instance, his frequently quoted

"CAROLINA.

"The despot treads thy sacred sands,
Thy pines give shelter to his bands,
Thy sons stand by with idle hands,
Carolina!

"He breathes at ease thy airs of balm,
He scorns the lances of thy palm;
Oh! who shall break thy craven calm,
Carolina!

"Thy ancient fame is growing dim,
A spot is on thy garment's rim;
Give to the winds thy battle hymn,
Carolina!

"Call on thy children of the hill,
Wake swamp and river, coast and rill,
Rouse all thy strength and all thy skill,
Carolina!

"Cite wealth and science, trade and art,
Touch with thy fire the cautious mart,
And pour thee through the people's heart,
Carolina!

"Till even the coward spurns his fears,
And all thy fields, and fens, and meres,
Shall bristle like thy palm, with spears,
Carolina!

"Hold up the glories of thy dead;
Say how thy elder children bled,
And point to Eutaw's battle-bed,
Carolina!

"Tell how the patriot's soul was tried,
And what his dauntless breast defied;
How Rutledge ruled, and Laurens died,
Carolina!

"Cry! till thy summons, heard at last,
Shall fall, like Marion's bugle-blast,
Re-echoed from the haunted past,
Carolina!

"I hear a murmur, as of waves
That grope their way through sunless caves,
Like bodies struggling in their graves,
Carolina!

"And now it deepens; slow and grand
It swells, as, rolling to the land,
An ocean broke upon the strand,
Carolina!

"Shout! let it reach the startled Huns!
And roar with all thy festal guns!
It is the answer of thy sons,
Carolina!

"They will not wait to hear thee call;
From Sachem's head to Sumter's wall
Resounds the voice of hut and hall,
Carolina!

"No! thou hast not a stain, they say,
Or none save what the battle-day
Shall wash in seas of blood away,
Carolina!

"Thy skirts, indeed, the foe may part,
Thy robe be pierced with sword and dart,
They shall not touch thy noble heart,
Carolina!

"Ere thou shalt own the tyrant's thrall,
Ten times ten thousand men must fall;
Thy corpse may harken to his call,
Carolina!

"When by thy bier, in mournful throngs,
The women chant thy mortal wrongs,
'Twill be their own funereal songs,
Carolina!

"From thy dead breast, by ruffians trod,
No helpless child shall look to God;
All shall be safe beneath the sod,
Carolina!

"Girt with such wills to do and bear,
Assured in right, and mailed in prayer,
Thou wilt not bow thee to despair,
Carolina!

"Throw thy bold banner to the breeze!
Front with thy ranks the threatening seas,
Like thine own proud armorial trees,
Carolina!

"Fling down thy gauntlet to the Huns,
And roar the challenge from thy guns;
Then leave the future to thy sons,
Carolina!"

By the way, where shall one find a finer, loftier, more nobly conceived stanza in all poetic literature than the tenth one in "Carolina"? Even the present generation, looking backward over the long years that have passed—looking dispassionately back upon the civil war period—even the busy men and women of to-day, must feel a strong thrill of emotion, a quickening of the pulse, while reading lines that appear to be surcharged with electrical force; whole stanzas seem to flash lightning and to roar thunder, like a storm in the Tropics. But only those who have personal recollections of these tremendous times can know what a battle-song, such as Timrod's "Carolina," or other impassioned lyrics of our Southern poets of the war, really meant to the people of the South. To these people there was not one word or line of exaggeration in any of them. Every sentiment, every phrase and simile was applauded as true. Every word and statement had the force of a fact. Their poets, far more than their orators, voiced their deepest, their highest thoughts, and their influence was the greatest, at home or in the field. Among these poet-voices none sang in bolder, clearer, or more moving strains than Timrod's reverberant voice.

Of all the hundreds of poets who have hymned the praise of Spring, which of them has sung more exquisitely the charms of the season than Timrod? It is the spring of the South, and the undertone of sadness in the closing verses adds a divine pathos to the picture:

"SPRING.

"Spring, with that nameless pathos in the air,
Which dwells with all things fair;
Spring, with her golden sun and silver rain,
Is with us once again.

"Out in the lonely woods the jasmine burns
Its fragrant lamps, and turns
Into a royal court with green festoons
The banks of dark lagoons.

"In the deep heart of every forest-tree
The blood is all a-glee,
And there's a look about the leafless bowers
As if they dreamed of flowers.

"Yet still on every side we trace the hand
Of winter in the land,
Save where the maple reddens on the lawn,
Flushed by the season's dawn.

"Or where, like those strange semblances we find
That age to childhood bind,
The elm puts on, as if in Nature's scorn,
The brown of autumn corn.

"As yet the turf is dark, although you know
That, not a span below,
A thousand germs are groping through the gloom,
And soon will burst their tomb.

"Already, here and there, on frailest stems
Appear some azure gems,
Small as might deck, upon a gala-day,
The forehead of a Fay.

"In gardens you may note amid the dearth
The crocus breaking earth;
And near the snow-drop's tender white and green,
The violet in its screen.

"But many gleams and shadows needs must pass
Along the budding grass,
And weeks go by, before the enamoured South
Shall kiss the rose's mouth.

"Still there's a sense of blossoms yet unborn
In the sweet airs of morn;
One almost looks to see the very street
Grow purple at his feet.

"At times a fragrant breeze comes floating by,
And brings, you know not why,
A feeling as when eager crowds await
Before a palace gate

"Some wondrous pageant; and you scarce would start
If, from a beech's heart,
A blue-eyed Dryad, stepping forth, should say,
'Behold me! I am May!'

"Ah! who would couple thoughts of war and crime
With such a blessed time?
Who in the west-wind's aromatic breath
Could hear the call of death?

"Yet not more surely shall the spring awake
The voice of wood and brake,
Than she shall rouse, for all her tranquil charms,
A million men to arms.

"There shall be deeper hues upon her plains
Than all her sunlit rains,
And every gladdening influence around,
Can summon from its ground.

"Oh! standing on this desecrated mould,
Methinks that I behold,
Lifting her bloody daisies up to God,
Spring, kneeling on the sod.

"And calling, with the voice of all her rills,
Upon the ancient hills
To fall and crush the tyrants and the slaves
Who turn her meads to graves."

The ode to commemorate the decoration with flowers of the graves of Confederate soldiers in Magnolia cemetery, at Charleston, written in 1867, is one of the finest in the language, and worthy to stand beside the famous ode of Collins: "How sleep the brave, who sink to rest." "A Vision of Poesy" is a poem of considerable length, with some highly imaginative passages. Its metrical art is well sustained, but the stately, rather monotonous movement, its elaborately developed theme, the impression it leaves on the reader's mind of scholastic effort, are qualities that fail to give us that instant sense of inspiration, of naive grace and freshness, of unpremeditated art, of feeling gushing straight from the heart, the perfection of melody, which we always realize in his delightful lyrics, his short poems and sonnets. Take for instance, the simple, dainty, ethereally lovely lyric entitled "The Lily Confidant."

In "The Cotton Boll" Timrod has done for the fleecy staple of the South what Lanier did so excellently for "Corn." It is a poem replete with lovely fancies, vibrant with harmony, full of rich color and glow. No poet has ever painted the peculiar charm of a Southern landscape with a more masterful hand:

"Where sleeps the poet who shall fitly sing
The source wherefrom doth spring
That mighty commerce which, confined
To the mean channel of no selfish mart,
Goes out to every shore
Of this broad earth, and throngs the sea with ships
That bear no thunders; hushes hungry lips
In alien lands;
Joins with a delicate web remotest strands:
And gladdening rich and poor,
Doth gild Parisian domes,
Or feed the cottage-smoke of English homes
And only bounds its blessings by mankind!"

The poet who "fitly" sung this marvel is Timrod, and he "sleeps" in Trinity churchyard, Columbia, S. C.

In his "Katie" we have Timrod before us in his happiest mood, as the lover, and the interpreter of love, and as the enthusiastic painter of Nature, in her serenest and most attractive aspects. The poem is idyllic. The portrait of the fair English girl, environed by the beauty of an English landscape in spring-time, is a gem of poetic art. The Wordsworthian spirit is emphatically felt in much that Timrod wrote, especially in his nature-poems—the power he had of transmitting the common into something "rich and rare," and detecting the glory of Beauty in a daisy or a blade of grass. In Timrod's soul there was much of Wordsworth's worship of Nature.

In the delicate art of the sonnet, Timrod's genius manifested itself with a simple elegance, a condensed wealth of spiritual meaning, and

a grace of form but rarely excelled in English poetry. His sonnets rank among the best that America has produced. The acknowledged technical difficulties of this form of poetry add to the value of the success he achieved in this field, not to mention the intrinsic merit, the force and beauty of the poetry itself. It is hard to make a choice among so much excellence. At random I select the following

SONNETS.

—I—

"Are these wild thoughts, thus fettered in my rhymes,
Indeed the product of my heart and brain?
How strange that on my ear the rhythmic strain
Falls like faint memories of far off times!
When did I feel the sorrow, act the part,
Which I have striven to shadow forth in song?
In what dead century swept that mingled throng
Of mighty pains and pleasures through my heart?
Not in the yesterday of that still life,
Which I have passed so free and far from strife—
But somewhere in this weary world, I know,
In some strange land, beneath some Orient clime
I saw or shared a martyrdom sublime,
And felt a deeper grief than any later woe.

—II—

"Some truths there be are better left unsaid;
Much is there that we may not speak unblamed.
On words, as wings, how many joys have fled!
The jealous fairies love not to be named.
There is an old-world tale of one whose bed
A genius graced, to all, save him, unknown;
One day the secret passed his lips, and sped
As secrets speed—thenceforth he slept alone.

Too much, oh! far too much is told in books;
Too broad a daylight wraps us all and each.
Ah! it is well that, deeper than our looks
Some secrets lie beyond conjecture's reach.
Ah! it is well that in the soul are nooks
That will not open to the keys of speech.

—III—

"I scarcely grieve, O Nature! at the lot
That pent my life within a city's bounds,
And shut me from thy sweetest sights and sounds.
Perhaps I had not learned, if some lone cot
Had nursed a dreamy childhood, what the mart
Taught me amid its turmoil; so my youth
Had missed full many a stern but wholesome truth.
Here, too, O Nature! in this haunt of Art,
Thy power is on me, and I own thy thrall.
There is no unimpressive spot on earth!
The beauty of the stars is over all,
And Day and Darkness visit every hearth.
Clouds do not scorn us: yonder factory's smoke
Looked like a golden mist when morning broke."

When Timrod's body had been buried in an unmarked grave he was soon forgotten by the public. Of course his memory, and the appreciation of his genius, remained dear and sacred to his family, his most intimate friends, and to the few choice spirits who, in a land of darkness, desolation and graves, still stood as faithful disciples of Truth and Beauty, and who strove to restore, or rebuild, the broken altars, and recall the divinities which had presided over them until the storm of war drove them into temporary exile.

The years following the close of the war were years of social, political, and commercial

travail, tumult, and conflict for the South. Her people were intent upon self-preservation. But little attention could be given to the interests or the claims of the spiritual and the esthetic. The voices of our poets sounded like the voice of one crying in a wilderness. Small heed was paid to the voices of the living singers, still less to the voices of the dead. Men were absorbed, body and soul, in the re-establishment of their homes, in labors to restore broken fortunes; in raising crops, in buying and selling; in starting again the wheels of long-interrupted progress; in resurrecting from the ashes of the past whatever might be worthy of preservation, or what could be used, along with fresh material, for the creation of a new and more glorious empire of the future. Hence this period was preeminently materialistic, mercenary, selfish, devoid of the desire for the fruits of the spiritual and the ornaments of the ideal. The times were coldly practical, prosaic, and men looked with disfavor upon almost everything that seemed calculated to interfere with the prevailing fashion of Mammon worship—the cult of the almighty "Dollar."

There was, therefore, small room in the minds of our people for the appreciation of poetry, and little regard for poets, living or dead. The singing of our living minstrels fell on inattentive ears, and the memory of the dead was allowed to fade into oblivion. The dead,

however, for the time being, had the best of the situation; they were exempt from "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune"; but to the living this period of apathy and neglect meant bitter disappointments, and occasionally actual starvation, and untimely death. We need only to point to the painful life-stories of Timrod and Lanier.

Under such circumstances, resulting from a long and destructive civil war, the presence of lamentable indifference to the interests of literature, and of the arts generally, can be readily accounted for. That all artists, and the representatives of literature, were but poorly appreciated and rarely rewarded, followed as an inevitable sequence. But that during recent years a very gratifying change for the better has come over the spirit of the Southern people, is a self-evident fact. Among all classes there has been a general revival in the interests of education, a fruitful longing for the quickening influences of higher culture. Love for the true and the beautiful, just appreciation of the Fine Arts, admiration and pecuniary reward for artist and author, are tangible proofs of the spiritual reincarnation of our people.

This manifestation of intellectual advancement, of the readjustment of mental and moral standards on the highest levels of human aspirations and achievement, keeps pace with the marvelous progress in the material world, and

the outlook for the future is radiant with hope and promise. The point I have attempted to make clear in the foregoing remarks is well illustrated in Timrod's case.

In 1898, Dr. F. Muench of Charleston, in a magazine article, said:

"For twenty-five long years after his death Timrod's name was hardly ever mentioned, and rare—very rare—are the instances of men whose memory, buried under oblivion for so long a time, is suddenly and lastingly revived and redeemed in the rueful and ardent recognition of his people; and it is furthermore evident that such rare cases bear in themselves a convincing proof of the man's intrinsic worth to humanity. Do we, then, really stand here before such a wonder of resurrection from the grave, before a miracle of rehabilitation of a deserving man's claim to the undying gratitude of posterity?

"We do! Not only that daily more and more lecturers and professors choose his life and his life's work as themes for their dissertations—not only that there has lately arisen an ever-growing demand for his work, whereof not one copy is to be found anywhere and at any price (and yet he sold it for a loaf of bread!)—not only that more and more books on Southern literature bring extracts of his work—not only that America's ablest critic and most prominent literary authority, Richard Henry Stoddard,

calls him the greatest poet the South has yet produced—even now he is concurrently and universally recognized as Henry Timrod, the sweet Singer of the South."

In the light and in the appreciative spirit of the New Day, let us forget the gloom and the apathy of the past.

In October, 1898, a number of friends of Henry Timrod, and admirers of his genius, determined to publish a new and complete edition of his poems, and to erect a befitting public memorial in his honor. When the difficulties in the way of this object had been successfully overcome, these public-spirited gentlemen organized under the name of "The Timrod Memorial Association" of South Carolina. A well known Boston publishing house was engaged to print the book, and it was issued May 1, 1899. The introduction is an earnest and sympathetic tribute to the poet, and gives an interesting account of his life. The book met with instant success, not only due to its intrinsic merits, but also to the excellent business management of the gentlemen who supervised its publication and sale, and who, in the gratification of this success, felt themselves richly rewarded for their unselfish labors. In a short time the memorial edition of four thousand copies was sold, and the proceeds were applied as proposed.

In the fall of 1900 Mr. Edward V. Valentine of Richmond, Virginia, the distinguished

sculptor, was commissioned to make a bronze bust of Timrod, to be mounted upon a pedestal of Carolina granite. On May 1, 1901, the monument, chaste in design, and with its speaking likeness of the poet, was unveiled at Charleston with impressive ceremonies, and before a large concourse of people. The monument stands in Washington Square, in a locality of historic interest. Eloquent addresses by prominent speakers were delivered; civic societies, public schools, and colleges were represented, and the ladies of Charleston contributed a wealth of flowers for this festal occasion. A chaste and graceful poem, written for the occasion by Henry Austin of New York, was read by the author, and so an event, gratifying lovers of literature everywhere, and in every particular most honorable to all concerned, passed into history. Mr. Hamilton W. Mabie noted the occasion in an editorial article in the *Outlook* of May 11, 1901, in which he paid Timrod, and the poetry of the South, a very graceful tribute. Alluding to Timrod, Hayne, and Lanier, he said that they were not only men of stainless life; there was a touch of the heroic in each of them, and that they belonged as much to the North as to the South. "Timrod, especially," he said, "appeals to the Northern reader by reason of his freedom of imagination, his power of surrender to emotion, and the chivalric note of his spirit."

A pleasant incident, also, in connection with the work of the Memorial Association, is the fact that the graves of Timrod, of his child Willie, his mother and sister, in the cemetery at Columbia, have been permanently marked, and made as attractive as possible.

The poetical works of Henry Timrod reveal to the thoughtful reader the soul of a singer upon whom has been bestowed, in rich measure, the heavenly afflatus; one whom the grace of God had made a poet; one who had a divine message to deliver to the world; one in whom the true and good and beautiful found fit expression in wise and philosophic thoughts, in noble and perfect form.

As an interpreter of Nature he sang as her intimate friend and lover. He laid his ear to her lips, and she revealed to him her most sacred secrets, teaching him, as her poet, the language through which he might tell them to the world. As a narrator in verse of the joys and sorrows, the hopes and fears of human life —the ever-changing vicissitudes that accompany life's journey from the cradle to the grave —he impresses us with his loyalty to truth, to faith, to reverence for whatsoever ennobles our nature, and fits the soul for its heritage of immortality.

As a singer of songs, pure and simple, he is unsurpassed for the purity and simplicity of his artistic methods, the clearness and sonorousness

of his verse, the haunting lyric lilt and liquidness of his melody. Take him all in all, his place in the front rank of American and English minor poets can never be successfully challenged. His life and work is best epitomized in the words inscribed upon one of the bronze panels of his monument:

"Through clouds and through sunshine, in peace and in war, amid the stress of poverty and the storms of civil strife, his soul never faltered and his purpose never failed. To his poetic mission he was faithful to the end. In life and in death he was not disobedient unto the Heavenly vision."

ABRAM JOSEPH RYAN

Reverend Abram Joseph Ryan, familiarly known as "Father Ryan, the poet-priest," according to some of his biographers, was born in Virginia, in 1840. This is the statement of Davidson, in his "Living Writers of the South" (New York, 1869). But concerning the date of his birth, and his place of nativity, no positive information seems to be at hand. His latest and most accurate biographer, John Moran, in the memoir he wrote for the Household edition of the poet's works, says that Hagerstown, Maryland, Norfolk, Virginia, and Limerick, Ireland, are claimed to be his birth-place, and that the date of his birth is variously stated to be 1834, 1836, and 1840. Moran's memoir is the latest biography we have of Father Ryan, and is probably the surest relative to the facts of the poet's life. We gather from this that, when Ryan was eight years old, his parents resided in St. Louis. In that city he received his early training, under the supervision of the Brothers of the Christian Schools. He was a bright and ambitious pupil, and soon gave proof of a highly gifted mind. Modesty,

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amiability, and a deep devotional spirit were conspicuous elements of his character. This religious tendency in his nature influenced his teachers to direct his studies with the view of fitting him, eventually, for the priesthood, a view fully in accord with the desire and inclination of the future priest and poet.

Later on he entered the Ecclesiastical Seminary at Niagara, New York. In this institution he continued his studies with great ardor and success, in due time graduating with honors. He was then ordained as a priest, and entered upon the active duties of a missionary.

When the war between the States began he entered the Confederate army as a chaplain, serving the Southern cause faithfully in that capacity, until the war closed at fateful Appomattox.

After the war he was pastor of the Roman Catholic church in Nashville, Tennessee; also at Clarksville and Knoxville, in the same State.

Removing to Augusta, Georgia, he established a paper in that city called *The Banner of the South*. This journal he conducted and edited for five years with conspicuous ability. The paper did not prove a financial success, and suspended. During this period he was an occasional contributor to various magazines and literary journals, in prose and verse; also devoting much time and labor to lectures for the benefit of the orphans and the crippled soldiers of the South.

Removing to Mobile, Alabama, he served as pastor of St. Mary's Church in that city, from 1870 to 1883. In the latter year he was given permission to travel through the country on a lecture tour, in behalf of a very worthy charitable institution. While thus engaged his health failed and he was compelled to abstain from all active work. While living in retirement at the Franciscan monastery, in Louisville, Kentucky, the end came, and he died on the twenty-third day of April, 1886. A "Life of Christ," upon which he had been at work for some years, remained unfinished.

I had the privilege of meeting him in Atlanta and hearing him lecture for the benefit of the institution of charity to which allusion has already been made. Naturally, the many years which have passed since then have somewhat dimmed the picture of the striking personality that stood before us on that occasion, but the outlines are still vividly impressed on my memory. He was of medium height, his shoulders, though somewhat stooping, were broad, and firmly set upon them was a remarkably massive head, with a very broad and full forehead. His dark hair, brushed backward negligently, was long and curly, gracefully framing his pale face, a face whose expression was sad and somewhat austere; but it was full of power, carved, here and there, with lines and furrows which with mute eloquence indicated a

strong, passionate nature, but subdued and held in check by a mighty inward purpose; the face exhibited the results of great spiritual struggles, of sorrow and of suffering, the scars of the conflict remaining, but their meaning glorified and made holy by the serene and abiding light that shines out of a soul that has conquered its peace and resignation through prayer and religious meditations. His voice was clear, his elocution simple, direct, emphatic. But the most expressive feature of that strong, pathetic face was the expression of his eyes; large, deep-set and dark, shining out from under finely arched eyebrows, they were indeed luminous with the splendor of a pure and richly endowed soul. This is the portrait, as I remember it, of Father Ryan, the poet-priest, a few years before his death.

Father Ryan's poetic genius was of a high order, and he will always hold a conspicuous place among American poets. Certainly the people of the South honor their poet-priest, and have given him a warm place in their hearts. His popularity is proven by the numerous editions of his poems and songs which have been published. The fact that he is distinctively known as the "poet of the Lost Cause" gives him a unique place, separating him from the other American poets of his time. He sang the pæans, he chanted the requiems of that Cause. In defense of their native land, for

principles they honestly believed to be true, the patriotic people of the South gladly pledged their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor, and brave men fought, bled, and died for them on many a bloody battle-field. These brave men and their deeds Father Ryan has immortalized in his poems and songs. The poet placed these songs upon his country's altar, as offerings of patriotism. For this reason his memory is precious to his people, and they have crowned him with a laurel-wreath as beautiful as those that adorn the brows of the German Koerner and the Greek Tyrtæus, or that of any one of the fiery-souled bards whose lyrics, bewailing the defeat of a people's hopes, or celebrating its victories, have become a glorious heritage of the human race.

This fervid martial vein is fully displayed in his "Sentinel Songs," one of which closes with this lofty sentiment:

"When marble wears away,
And monuments are dust,
The Songs that guard our soldiers' clay
Will still fulfil their trust!"

Another very popular poem of his is the clear-ringing, brilliant lyric called

"THE SWORD OF ROBERT LEE.

"Forth from its scabbard, pure and bright,
Flashed the sword of Lee!
Far in the front of the deadly fight,
High o'er the brave in the cause of Right,
Its stainless sheen, like a beacon light,
Led us to victory!

"Out of its scabbard, where, full long,
It slumbered peacefully,
Roused from its rest by the battle's song,
Shielding the feeble, smiting the strong,
Guarding the right, avenging the wrong,
Gleamed the sword of Lee.

"Forth from its scabbard, high in air
Beneath Virginia's sky;
And they who saw it gleaming there,
And knew who bore it, knelt to swear
That where that sword led they would dare
To follow—and to die.

"Out of its scabbard! Never hand
Waved sword from stain as free,
Nor purer sword led braver band,
Nor braver bled for brighter land,
Nor brighter land had cause so grand,
Nor cause a chief like Lee!

"Forth from its scabbard! How we prayed
That sword might victor be;
And when our triumph was delayed,
And many a heart grew sore afraid,
We still hoped on while gleamed the blade
Of noble Robert Lee.

"Forth from its scabbard all in vain
Bright flashed the sword of Lee;
'Tis shrouded now in its sheath again,
It sleeps the sleep of our noble slain,
Defeated, yet without a stain,
Proudly and peacefully."

The widest known and quoted lyric of all, an indubitable inspiration, composed in the white heat of lyric passion—the splendid requiem song of a defeated people, yet proud spirited and magnificent even in defeat, is Ryan's "The Conquered Banner." When the

poem was first published it was signed "Moina." In an old scrap-book of mine there is a clipping taken from some Southern paper, containing the poem. In a footnote the editor says: "By special request we republish this fine lyric which, by the way, will be found the last in the collection of Southern Songs, published by Blalock & Co. Who is 'Moina'? May we not hope to hear again from her pen?" (The *her* is in italics.) Evidently the belief was current then that a woman had written the famous lyric. Father Ryan, directly after the war, wrote a number of his poems under the nom de plume "Moina."

"THE CONQUERED BANNER.

"Furl that Banner, for 'tis weary;
Round its staff 'tis drooping dreary;
Furl it, fold it, it is best;
For there's not a man to wave it,
And there's not a sword to save it,
And there's not one left to lave it
In the blood which heroes gave it;
And its foes now scorn and brave it;
Furl it, hide it, let it rest!

"Take the Banner down! 'tis tattered;
Broken is its staff and shattered;
And the valiant hosts are scattered
Over whom it floated high.
Oh! 'tis hard for us to fold it;
Hard to think there's none to hold it;
Hard that those who once unrolled it
Now must furl it with a sigh.

"Furl that Banner! furl it sadly!
Once ten thousand hailed it gladly,
And ten thousand wildly, madly,
Swore it should forever wave;
Swore that foeman's sword should never
Hearts like theirs entwined dissever,
And that flag should float forever
O'er their freedom or their grave!

"Furl it! for the hands that grasped it,
And the hearts that fondly clasped it,
Cold and dead are lying low;
And that Banner—it is trailing!
While around it sounds the wailing
Of its people in their woe.

"For, though conquered, they adore it!
Love the cold, dead hands that bore it!
Weep for those who fell before it!
Pardon those who trailed and tore it!
But, oh! wildly they deplore it,
Now to furl and fold it so.

"Furl that Banner! True, 'tis gory,
Yet 'tis wreathed around with glory,
And 'twill live in song and story,
Though its folds are in the dust;
For its fame on brightest pages,
Penned by poets and by sages,
Shall go sounding down the ages,—
Furl its folds though now we must.

"Furl that Banner, softly, slowly!
Treat it gently—it is holy—
For it droops above the dead.
Touch it not—unfold it never,
Let it droop there, furled forever,
For its people's hopes are fled!"

Patriotism—his intense love of the South, and of the cause her people had defended with such heroic valor, and the sufferings of defeat,

so patiently and bravely borne, always inflamed this poet's soul, and the strains he then struck from his harp came "as the winds come, when forests are rended; came as the waves come, when navies are stranded." Equally peculiar, in their fervid mood and profound earnestness, are his devotional songs and poems; his deeply religious and meditative spirit took delight in the contemplation of the ideal, the divine, the eternal. In all of his religious poetry we are met by the warmth of pious zeal and the mystical glow of spiritual revelation. The words seem to throb with emotion and struggling aspiration. So keen, so subtle are the feelings controlling him during the moods from which these effusions flowed, that it seems as if the poet, finally, can express himself only in lyrical sobs and moanings; he seems to have been thrown into a kind of ecstasy, in which he beholds visions of ineffable spiritual beauty, and seems ready to touch and almost lift the curtain that veils the Holy of Holies, and thus, by a glimpse reveal the very face of God! It is in these songs and poems, coming from the depths of his soul, that we hear in Father Ryan the clearest and richest poetic voice, in America, of the great Christian Church of which he was the type and representative.

In his Church Ryan found a wide field for the exercise of the spirituality so characteristic of him. It bore him to the empyrean on the

wings of its majestic anthems and glorious symphonies. It gave him opportunity for retirement, for self-communion, for meditation on supernal things. It harmonized with the introspection and self-immolating tendencies of his nature. It nourished him with heavenly manna; it enchanted him with the glamour of the mystical, the supernatural; it gave him moral strength, and directed the excursions of his imagination. As a fine example of his devotional muse let me give here his weird, intensively imaginative

"SONG OF THE MYSTIC.

"I walk down the Valley of Silence—
Down the dim, voiceless valley—alone!
And I hear not the fall of a footstep
Around me, save God's and my own;
And the hush of my heart is as holy
As hovers where angels have flown.

"Long ago I was weary of voices,
Whose music my heart could not win;
Long ago I was weary of voices,
That fretted my soul with their din;
Long ago was I weary of places
Where I met but the human—and sin.

"I walked in the world with the worldly,
I craved what the world never gave;
And I said: 'In the world each Ideal,
That shines like a star on life's wave,
Is wrecked on the shores of the Real,
And sleeps like a dream in a grave.'

"And still did I pine for the Perfect,
And still found the False with the True;
I sought 'mid the Human for Heaven,
And caught a mere glimpse of the Blue;
And I wept when the clouds of the Mortal,
Veiled even that glimpse from my view.

"And I toiled on, heart-tired of the Human,
And I moaned 'mid the mazes of men,
Till I knelt, long ago, at an altar,
And I heard a voice call me. Since then
I walked down the Valley of Silence,
That lies far beyond mortal ken.

"Do you ask what I found in the Valley?
'Tis my trysting place with the Divine;
And I fell at the feet of the Holy,
And above me a voice said: 'Be mine';
And there arose from the depths of my spirit
An echo—'My heart shall be thine.'

"Do you ask how I live in the Valley?
I weep, and I dream, and I pray,
But my tears are as sweet as the dew-drops
That fall on the roses of May;
And my prayer, like a perfume from censers,
Ascendeth to God night and day.

"In the hush of the Valley of Silence,
I dream all the songs that I sing;
And the music floats down the dim Valley,
Till each finds a word for a wing,
That to hearts, like the dove of the Deluge,
A message of peace they may bring.

"But far on the deep there are billows,
That never shall break on the beach;
And I have heard songs in Silence,
That never shall float into speech;
And I have had dreams in the Valley,
Too lofty for language to reach;

"And I have seen Thoughts in the Valley—
Ah, me! how my spirit was stirred!
And they wear holy veils on their faces,
Their footsteps can scarcely be heard;
They pass through the Valley like virgins,
Too pure for the touch of a word!

"Do you ask me the place of the Valley,
Ye hearts that are harrowed by care?
It lieth afar between mountains,
And God and His angels are there;
And one is the dark mount of Sorrow,
And one the bright mountain of Prayer."

Another beautiful and pathetic song of his has been set to music by Prof. Samuel P. Snow. It is called "When?" The poet, anticipating death, gladly welcomes him as "a heavenly messenger" bringing peace and rest, and the assurance that the poet's faith and trust in God will take him where he can "kneel and kiss thy feet in Heaven, oh, my God!" From Father Ryan's miscellaneous verse, even that which was conceived and written in his lighter and most fugitive mood, it is impossible to select anything that could be called commonplace or trivial. The charm of pure sentiment, the sure though light touch of the master-hand, the glow and fancy of an original mind, the unmistakable afflatus, present themselves; "the Ryan mark" is always evident.

The flowers and the fruits of Ryan's genius grew out of a rich native soil, and though the field he cultivated was not a very wide one, nor his technical skill such as would satisfy all the

fine demands of modern poetical workmanship, yet the field he did occupy he made peculiarly his own. He was a follower of no established "school"; he was no imitator of any master. He was content to lay his productions upon the twin altars of Patriotism and Religion, doing this in the spirit of loyalty, self-consecration, and adoration. He cared nothing for the usual prizes that are sought for by ambitious writers —fame and gold. The eyes of his spirit were fixed upon a far higher goal, upon a reward grander than any the world could bestow upon him—the crown of immortality, that became his when the finger of God had touched him, on that beautiful Spring-day, in a cell of his monastery. Then was realized by him the hope, nay, the assurance, expressed in his pathetic song "When":

> "I know it will be sweet
> To leave the haunts of men,
> And rest beneath the sod,
> To kneel and kiss Thy feet,
> In Thy home, oh, my God!"

Considered as a man, as a priest, and as a poet, Father Ryan exemplified in each the beauty of a noble life, the life of one who devoted himself to the welfare of his fellow-men and to the service of God.

As a priest he wore unstained the livery of his divine calling. As a poet he wrote out of his own heart and, therefore, wrote himself into

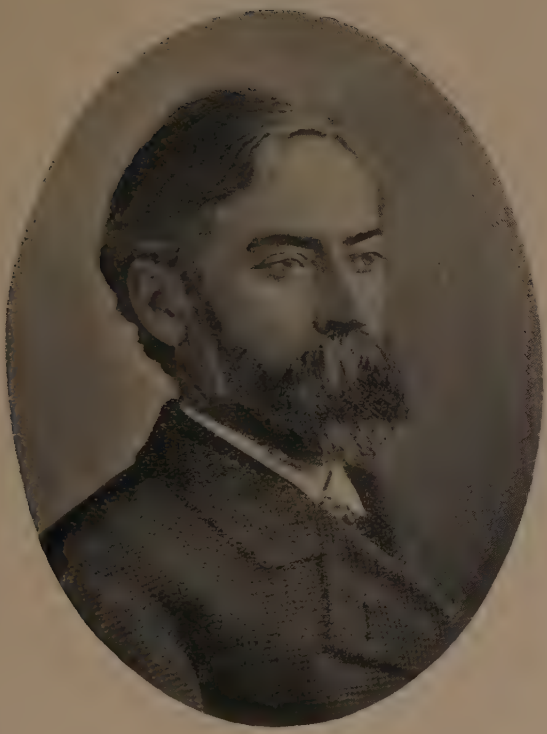
the hearts of others. He never defiled his "singing robes," nor put them on for any unworthy purpose.

That the poetic works of Father Ryan have secured permanent popularity is attested by the fact that his songs and poems have passed through twelve editions. This popularity rests upon the fact that all lovers of true poetry recognize the genuineness of his work, loving and honoring him because his songs

> "Gushed from his heart,
> As showers from the clouds of summer,
> Or tears from the eyelids start."

JAMES BARRON HOPE

James Barron Hope was born March 23, 1829, at the Gosport Navy Yard, near Norfolk, Virginia, at the home of his grandfather, Commodore James Barron, who was the commander-in-chief of the Virginia Colonial Navy during the American Revolution. His early years were passed in Hampton, Virginia, and he attended school there. He was graduated from William and Mary College in 1847, and studied law. In 1856 he was elected Commonwealth's attorney for Hampton. Even as a boy his literary ability was conspicuous. Later on he attracted the attention of the literary world by the publication, in a Baltimore journal, of a series of poems, which appeared under the nom de plume of "Henry Ellen, Esq." Other poems, published in the *Southern Literary Messenger,* of Richmond, Virginia, added to the young poet's rising fame. In 1857 he published a volume of poems under the title "Leoni di Monota and Other Poems." This, his first book, contained his brilliant ballad "The Charge of Balaklava." It is a poem full of the fire of battle, celebrating in vigorous stanzas the heroic deeds of Nolan and his "six hundred"



James Barron Hope.

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troopers, made immortal by Tennyson's splendid poem. In 1857 he was married to Miss Annie Beverly Whiting of Hampton, Virginia. When the war between the States began, he volunteered and served during the war with conspicuous gallantry, and rose to the rank of captain and quartermaster. James Wood Davidson, in his "Living Writers of the South" (1869), tells of how he met the poet, after the surrender of Lee at Appomattox, in the town of Greensboro, North Carolina, and describes the incident, and his personal appearance, as follows:

"I was standing in front of the Cape Fear Bank, just then the office of the Secretary of the Confederacy, when a gentleman on horseback rode up. He was a spare, slender man, of thin visage; of rather light hair; beard thin and worn in American full-faced style; wearing spectacles; speaking in a soft, gentlemanlike tone; of manner impressive, but refined, and Southern. He appeared a little less than six feet in height, and wore the uniform of a Confederate captain.

"We exchanged a few words of conversation, frequently interrupted. In a few minutes he passed on; and in the earthquake of events that rushed and crashed over us that day and the next, I did not again enjoy an opportunity of seeing the poet-captain again."

Hope's war ballads and poems are worthy to be ranked among the notable poetic effusions

of that strenuous period of our Southern literature. They voiced freely and boldly the spirit of that time, and are excellent specimens of metrical art. One, which takes for its text, "Liberty is always won where there exists the unconquerable will to be free," is called

"THE OATH OF FREEDOM.

"Born free, thus we resolve to live,
By Heaven, we will be free!
By all the stars which beam on high—
By the green earth, the mighty sea,
By God's unshaken majesty,
We will be free or die!

"Then let the drums all roll,
Let all the trumpets blow!
Mind, heart and soul,
We spurn control
Attempted by the foe.

"Born free, thus we resolve to live,
By Heaven, we will be free!
And vainly now the Northmen try
To beat us down—in arms we stand,
To strike for this our native land;
We will be free or die!
Then let the drums all roll, etc.

"Born free, we thus resolve to live,
By Heaven, we will be free!
Our wives and children look on high,
Pray God to smile upon the Right,
And bid us in the deadly fight
As freemen live or die!
Then let the drums all roll, etc.

"Born free, thus we resolve to live,
By Heaven, we will be free!
And ere we cease this battle-cry,

Be all our blood, our kindred's, spilt!
On bayonet or saber-hilt,
We will be free or die!
Then let the drums all roll, etc.

"Born free, thus we resolve to live,
By Heaven, we will be free!
Defiant let the banners fly,
Shake out their glories to the air,
And kneeling, brothers, let us swear
We will be free or die!
Then let the drums all roll, etc.

"Born free, thus we resolve to live,
By Heaven, we will be free!
And to this oath the dead reply—
Our valiant fathers' sacred ghosts,
These with us, and the God of hosts,
We will be free or die!

"Then let the drums all roll,
Let all the trumpets blow!
Mind, heart and soul,
We spurn control
Attempted by a foe!"

Another defiant war-cry, intended to stir the hearts of those who still hesitated to take the fateful step of secession and inevitable conflict, is a fine dramatic lyric, entitled

"'LIBERA NOS, O DOMINE!'

"What! ye hold yourselves as freemen?
Tyrants love just such as ye!
Go! abate your lofty manner!
Write upon the State's old banner:
'A furore Normanorum,
Libera nos, O Domine!'

"Sink before the Federal altar,
Each one low, on bended knee,
Pray, with lips that sob and falter,
This prayer from the coward's psalter:
'A furore Normanorum,
Libera nos, O Domine!'

"But ye hold that quick repentance
In the Northern mind will be;
This repentance comes no sooner
Than the robber's did, at Luna!
'A furore Normanorum,
Libera nos, O Domine!'

"He repented him:—the Bishop
Gave him absolution free;
Poured upon him sacred chrysm,
In the pomp of his baptism;
'A furore Normanorum,
Libera nos, O Domine!'

"He repented—then he sickened!
Was he pining for the sea?
In extremis was he shriven,
The viaticum was given,
'A furore Normanorum,
Libera nos, O Domine!'

"Then the old cathedral's choir
Took the plaintive minor key;
With the Host upraised before him,
Down the marble aisles they bore him;
'A furore Normanorum,
Libera nos, O Domine!'

"While the Bishop and the Abbot—
All the monks of high degree—
Chanting praise to the Madonna,
Came to do him Christian honor!
'A furore Normanorum,
Libera nos, O Domine!'

"Now the miserere's cadence
Takes the voices of the sea,
As the music-billows quiver,
See the dead freebooter shiver!
'A furore Normanorum,
Libera nos, O Domine!'

"Is it that these intonations
Thrill him thus from head to knee?
Lo, his cerements burst asunder,
'Tis a sight of fear and wonder!
'A furore Normanorum,
Libera nos, O Domine!'

"Fierce he stands before the Bishop,
Dark as shape of Destiny;
Hark! a shriek ascends, appalling—
Down the prelate goes—dead—falling!
'A furore Normanorum,
Libera nos, O Domine!'

"Hastings lives! He was but feigning!
What! Repentant? Never he!
Down he smites the priests and friars,
And the city lights with fires!
'A furore Normanorum,
Libera nos, O Domine!'

"Ah! the children and the maidens,
'Tis in vain they strive to flee!
Where the white-haired priests lie bleeding
Is no place for woman's pleading.
'A furore Normanorum,
Libera nos, O Domine!'

"Louder swells the frightful tumult—
Pallid Death holds revelry!
Dies the organ's mighty clamor
By the Norseman's iron hammer!
'A furore Normanorum,
Libera nos, O Domine!'

"So they thought that he'd repented!
Had they nailed him to the tree,
He had not deserved their pity,
And they had not—lost their city.
'A furore Normanorum,
Libera nos, O Domine!'

"For the moral in this story,
Which is plain as truth can be:
If we trust the North's relenting,
We shall shriek—too late repenting:
'A furore Normanorum,
Libera nos, O Domine!'"

When the civil war was over, Captain Hope, with undiminished vigor, began the rebuilding of his broken fortune, devoting his splendid abilities also very successfully to promoting the material and intellectual interests of his native State. He became superintendent of the public schools of Norfolk, the arduous duties of which position he performed with great credit to himself and benefit to the community. He also became editor of the *Landmark,* the leading daily paper of Norfolk, which under his editorial control became one of the most influential journals in the South. He continued to edit the *Landmark* to within a few months of his death, which occurred September 15, 1887.

He was a versatile as well as a brilliant and thoughtful writer. From his prolific pen came numerous essays, addresses for historic and literary occasions, also a novel called "Madelon," and many fine miscellaneous poems.

He was frequently selected to be the poet for public anniversaries, which his muse adorned with graceful wreaths of song. Among the most notable of these occasions was the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the settlement of Jamestown, Virginia, by the English; the unveiling of the statue of Washington at Richmond; and the Congress of the United States selected him as the national poet for the celebration of the Yorktown Centennial, in 1881. His ode for this memorable event was called "Arms and the Man," and was a masterly production.

Another beautiful commemorative poem was the one he wrote for the corner-stone laying of the Lee monument at Richmond, Virginia, in October, 1887. He finished this poem a few days before his death, September 15th, and the poem was read on the appointed day by his friend, Capt. W. C. McCabe. The Lee Memorial Ode is worthy to rank among the best of our American patriotic poems.

The Yorktown Centennial Ode has many noble passages. The theme and the occasion were of a character to inspire heart and mind with the lessons of a grand history, and the muse of any true poet with splendid imagination. To such an invitation the genius of Hope responded readily and worthily. His portrait of Washington is painted with idealistic strength and classic art:

"Achilles came from Homer's Jove-like brain
Pavilioned 'mid his ships where Thetis trod;
But he whose image dominates this plain
Came from the hand of God!

"Yet, of his life, which shall all time adorn
I dare not sing; to try the theme would be
To drink as 'twere that Scandinavian horn
Whose tip was in the sea.

"I bow my head and go upon my ways,
Who tells that story can but gild the gold;
Could I pile Alps on Apenines of praise
The tale would not be told.

"Not his the blade which lyric fables say
Cleft Pyrenees from ridge to nether bed,
But his the sword which cleared the Sacred Way
For Freedom's feet to tread.

"Not Cæsar's genius nor Napoleon's skill
Gave him proud mastery o'er the trembling earth;
But great in honesty and sense, and will—
He was the 'man of worth.'

"He knew not North, nor South, nor West, nor East;
Childless himself, Father of States he stood,
Strong and sagacious as a knight turned priest,
And vowed to deeds of good.

"Compared with all earth's heroes I may say
He was, with even half his virtues hid,
Greater in what his hand refrained than they
Were great in what they did.

"And thus his image dominates all time,
Uplifted like the everlasting dome
Which rises in a miracle sublime
Above eternal Rome.

"On Rome's once blooming plain where'er we stray
That dome majestic rises on the view,
Its cross aglow with every wandering ray
That shines along the blue;

"So his vast image shadows all the lands,
So holds forever man's adoring eye,
And o'er the Union which he left, it stands
Our cross against the sky."

It was a happy thought of the poet to concentrate special attention upon each part of the historic panorama of the century, by arranging the Colonies in natural groups—the New England group, the Middle group, the Southern group. The group of Southern Colonies he adorns with a poetic wreath as follows:

"Then sweeping down below Virginia's capes,
From Chesapeake to where Savannah flows,
We find the settlers laughing 'mid their grapes
And ignorant of snows.

"The fragrant uppowock, and golden corn
Spread far a-field by river and lagoon,
And all the months poured out from Plenty's Horn
Were opulent as June.

"Yet, they had tragedies all dark and fell!
Lone Roanoke Island rises on the view,
And this Peninsula its tale could tell
Of Opecancanough!

"But, when the ocean thunders on the shore
Its waves, though broken, overflow the beach,
So here our Fathers on and onward bore
With English laws and speech.

"Kind skies above them, under foot rich soils;
Silence and Savage at their presence fled;
This Giant's causeway, sacred through their toils,
Resounded at their tread.

"With ardent hearts, and ever-open hands,
Candid and honest, brave and proud they grew,
Their lives and habits colored by fair hands
As skies give waters hue.

"The race in semi-Feudal States appears—
Their knightly figures glow in tender mist,
With ghostly pennons flung from ghostly spears
And ghostly hawks on wrist.

"By enterprise and high adventures stirred,
From rude lunette and sentry-guarded croft
They hawked at Empire, and, as on they spurred,
Fate's falcon soared aloft!

"Fate's falcon soared aloft full strong and free,
With blood on talons, plumage, beak, and breast!
Her shadow like a storm-shade on the sea
Far-sailing down the West!

"Swift hoofs clang out behind that falcon's flights—
Hoofs shod with golden horseshoes catch the eye!
And as they ring, we see the Forest-Knights—
The Cavaliers ride by!"

In "Three Summer Studies" we see our poet's muse at its best in the vivid description of natural scenery; in the sights and sounds and curious medley of farm life; of the radiant, redolent summer atmosphere; of the mingling hues of forest, and field, and garden, and orchard, of glowing sky and dark lagoon; of wandering cloud-shadows, of storm and calm —the richly colored picture of a Southern summer, painted by an artist "to the manner born." The lines are smooth and flowing, and the entire conception is worked out with admirable art. They are "Studies" worthy of being studied.

—I—

"The cock hath crowed. I hear the doors unbarr'd;
Down to the moss-grown porch my way I take,
And hear, beside the well within the yard
Full many an ancient, quacking, splashing drake,

And gobbling goose, and noisy brood-hen—all
Responding to yon strutting gobbler's call.

"The dew is thick upon the velvet grass—
The porch-rails hold it in translucent drops,
And as the cattle from the enclosure pass,
Each one, alternate, slowly halts and crops
The tall, green spears, with all their dewy load
Which grows beside the well-known pasture-road.

"A lustrous polish is on all the leaves—
The birds flit in and out with varied notes—
The noisy swallows twitter 'neath the eaves—
A partridge-whistle through the garden floats,
While yonder gaudy peacock harshly cries,
As red and gold flush all the eastern skies.

"Up comes the sun; thro' the dense leaves a spot
Of splendid light drinks up the dew; the breeze
Which late made leafy music dies; the day grows hot,
And slumbrous sounds come from marauding bees;
The burnished river like a sword-blade shines,
Save where 'tis shadowed by the solemn pines.

—II—

"Over the farm is brooding silence now—
No reaper's song—no raven's clangor harsh—
No bleat of sheep—no distant low of cow—
No croak of frogs within the spreading marsh—
No bragging cock from littered farm-yard crows,
The scene is steeped in silence and repose.

"A trembling haze hangs over all the fields—
The panting cattle in the river stand
Seeking the coolness which its wave scarce yields.
It seems a Sabbath through the drowsy land:
So hushed is all beneath the Summer's spell,
I pause and listen for some faint church-bell.

"The leaves are motionless—the song-birds mute—
The very air seems somnolent and sick:
The spreading branches with o'er-ripened fruit
Show in the sunshine all their clusters thick,

While now and then a mellow apple falls
With a dull sound within the orchard walls.

"The sky has but one solitary cloud,
Like a dark island, in a sea of light;
The parching furrows 'twixt the corn-rows plough'd
Seem fairly dancing in my dazzled sight,
While over yonder road a dusty haze
Grows reddish purple in the sultry blaze.

—III—

"That solitary cloud grows dark and wide,
While distant thunder rumbles in the air,
A fitful ripple breaks the river's tide—
The lazy cattle are no longer there,
But homeward come in long procession slow,
With many a bleat and many a plaintive low.

"Darker and wider-spreading o'er the west
Advancing clouds, each in fantastic form,
And mirrored turrets on the river's breast
Tell in advance the coming of the storm—
Closer and brighter glares the lightning's flash,
And louder, nearer, sounds the thunder's crash.

"The air of evening is intensely hot,
The breeze feels heated as it fans my brows,
Now sullen rain-drops patter down like shot—
Strike in the grass, or rattle 'mid the boughs.
A sultry lull: and then a gust again,
And now I see the thick-advancing rain.

"It fairly hisses as it comes along,
And where it strikes bounds up again in spray,
As if 'twere dancing to the fitful song
Made by the trees, which twist themselves and sway
In contest with the wind which rises fast,
Until the breeze becomes a furious blast;

"And now the sudden, fitful storm has fled,
The clouds lie piled up in the splendid west,
In massive shadow tipped with purplish red,
Crimson or gold. The scene is one of rest;
And on the bosom of yon still lagoon,
I see the crescent of the pallid moon."

Hope's impulses were all kindly and his outlook upon the world was altruistic. He was conservative in his views of life and in his estimate of men's motives in public or private matters. His patriotism was not bounded by narrow sectional lines, but ardently embraced our whole country, and his hopes for the future peace, prosperity, and union of the Republic were always optimistic. This spirit is well expressed in the concluding stanzas of his Portsmouth Ode, where he pictures the ideal historian—yet to be born—of the American Republic. I quote the lines as follows:

"In the future some historian shall come forth both strong and wise,
With a love of the Republic, and the truth before his eyes!
He will show the subtle causes of the war between the States,
He will go back in his studies far beyond our modern dates;
He will trace out hostile ideas, as the miner does the lodes;
He will show the different habits, born of different social codes.
He will show the Union riven, and the picture will deplore;
He will show it reunited and made stronger than before;
Slow and patient, fair and truthful, must the coming teacher be,
To show how the knife was sharpened, that was ground to prune the tree.
He will hold the scales of Justice, he will measure praise and blame,
And the South will stand the verdict, and will stand it without shame."

The strength and beauty of Hope's poetry is best exhibited in his odes; he rises to the nobility of his themes, intertwines beautiful flowers of poesy with the sterner material of historical facts, and impresses a permanent image of the times, the man, and the occasion upon the mind of the reader. Many of his miscellaneous poems are also virile, felicitous, and quickened with the genuine spirit of the muse. As father, husband, friend, in domestic and public life, he was loved and admired, and his name and memory have been honored by his countrymen, as such a noble man deserves to be honored.

His daughter, Mrs. Janey Hope Marr, some years ago collected and edited her father's poems, and the volume was published in Richmond under the appropriate title "A Wreath of Virginia Bay Leaves." The portrait of the poet and other illustrations enhance the value of this volume. The introduction is in excellent taste, and gives interesting references relative to the most notable of the poems. The monument to the poet in Elmwood cemetery, at Norfolk, erected by the citizens of that city, bears the following befitting inscription:

"The tribute of his friends, offered to the memory of the Poet, Patriot, Scholar, and Journalist, and the Knightly Virginia Gentleman."

In E. C. Stedman's elaborate volume "An American Anthology," a review of the poets

and poetry of America for the past one hundred years, strange to say, the name of James Barron Hope is not mentioned, nor is a line, even, of his famous "Yorktown Centennial Ode" quoted. In view of the fact that names of far less note, and some quite mediocre verses, are given conspicuous place, this omission is scarcely excusable.

FRANCIS ORRERY TICKNOR

It would seem that the vocation of a "country doctor," with its hard work day and night, its monotonous round of constant and exhaustive duties, making heavy drafts upon all the mental and physical resources, besides the lack of the stimulating social and intellectual influences which characterize metropolitan life—it would seem that such an environment would offer slight inducements and few opportunities to any one so situated, to cultivate esthetics, indulge in dreams of the imagination, and time for wooing the Muse of Poetry. But genius is an insistent, an irresistible power; it penetrates every barrier, overcomes every obstacle, making them, indeed, stepping-stones to success, and finds congenial nourishment for its sustenance, and the enjoyment of the divinest delights of life, in circumstances and environments which, to ungifted natures, would be as dry and barren as sands of the desert. A "country doctor" of the finest type of his profession, a good and, therefore, a noble man, and a poet of decided genius, was Dr. Francis O. Ticknor of Georgia, to a brief review of whose

life and poetical work this sketch is devoted. For the facts given I am indebted to the memoir written by Paul H. Hayne, which introduces the volume of Ticknor's collected poems, published in 1879, by J. B. Lippincott & Co., Philadelphia.

Dr. Ticknor was born in Baldwin County, Georgia, in 1822, and he died near Columbus, Georgia, in 1874. His father, a prominent physician, was a native of New Jersey; his grandparents were natives of Connecticut; his mother was a native of Savannah, Georgia, where Dr. Ticknor's father was married, and resided for some time. While still a young man he died. The widow and three small children then moved to Columbus, Georgia, where her three sons received an excellent education. Frank studied medicine and graduated in that profession from colleges in Philadelphia and New York. He married Miss Rosalie Nelson, daughter of Hon. T. M. Nelson, a distinguished veteran of the war of 1812, and a member of Congress.

Shortly after his marriage, Dr. Ticknor settled on a farm near Columbus, Georgia. The scenery around his farm is described as exceedingly beautiful, just such as a deeply poetic nature would take delight in. His home must have been an ideal one, the abode of all the domestic divinities. One of his favorite avocations was the cultivation of fruits and

flowers. Like Sidney Lanier, he was also a musician, playing exquisitely on the flute, and in many other ways the esthetic and scholarly side of his nature was finely developed and matured. The practical and humanitarian side was equally prominent. His warm heart, his genial, humor-loving temperament, and his medical skill found an ample field for exercise. He was devoted to his home, and its peaceful, soul-uplifting influences, as in the case of Lanier, contributed largely to his success in his life-work, and gave the serene tone so characteristic of his verse. He illustrated the truth that "home-loving hearts are happiest." One of his finest domestic poems is called

"HOME.

"Forest-girded, cedar-scented,
Veiled like Vesper, sweet and dim;
Pure as burned the Temple's glory,
Shadowed by the Seraphim;
Islet from contending oceans,
Coral-cinctured, crowned with palm,
Where the wrestling world's commotions
Melt through music into calm;
Throats that sing and wings that flutter
Softly 'mid the balm and bloom;
Sweeter sounds than lip can utter
Hath my heart for thee
My home.

"Bless that dear old Anglo-Saxon
For the sounds he formed so well;
Little words, the nectar-waxen
Harvest of a honey-cell,
Sealing all a summer's sweetness
In a single syllable!

For, of all his quaint word-building,
The queen-cell of all the comb,
Is that grand old Saxon mouthful,
Dear old Saxon heartful
Home."

Unostentatiously he put into daily practice the principles of virtue, mercy and charity, which constitute the foundation-principles of Christianity.

Paul Hayne pays him a graceful tribute in the memoir: "Far and wide," he says, "he was known and welcomed, especially among the suffering poor. His gleeful smile; his spontaneous criticisms (for his mind actually bubbled over with innocent humor) cheered up many a despondent invalid, and it is possible scared Despair, if not Death himself, away from the bedsides of patients just about to succumb. What wonder, therefore, that when, partly through fatigue, exposure, and the unremitting discharge of duty, their benefactor was in turn stricken down, to die after a brief, painful illness, the community mourned him as only those are mourned who could truly say, like Abou Ben Adhem, in his vision of the Angel and the Book of Gold, 'write me as one who loved his fellow-men.'"

The quaint, gentle, perennial humor of the man, gleams and smiles from his writings, and even his satire is warmed and chastened by it.

As a good example of his humoristic verse, I select the

"WHIPPOORWILL.

"Whip poor Will! Was there ever heard
Such a blood-thirsty, slanderous, scandalous bird!
Under the window so slyly to creep,
And whistle 'come whip him' while Will's asleep.
It's a bird of darkness, and not of day,
That whistles a hint that he dare not say.

"Whip poor Will! Why, what has he done?
Has he found your eggs, ma'am, and broken one?
Has he torn his jacket, or fought at play,
Or missed his lessons, or ran away,
Or broke a tumbler, or spoke at prayer?

"No, Willie's a boy that's nice and neat,
And Willie's a boy that's bright and sweet;
He's quiet at home and he's quick at school,
And he never breaks, if he knows, the rule;
And I really think it were wonderous silly
For nothing at all to whip poor Willie!

"But, whip poor Will, if you've really seen
Another Willie that's bad and mean,
And you think you ought, and think 'twill 'pay'
To whip poor Willie, why whip away.
And so good-by to your birdship till
There's more occasion to whip poor Will!"

In his martial lyrics and poems, Ticknor's genius exhibits itself in its most impressive flights. In the power of passionate feeling, in terse, concentrated diction, clear, ringing music, and idealistic imagery, the poetry evolved by the incidents, the pathos, the glory and the gloom of our civil war, shows but few examples that can be considered superior to the best of Ticknor's contributions to that phase of our American literature. During that terrible

struggle the poets and song-writers of the North and of the South vied with each other in invoking the Muse. It is but simple justice to say that the work of Southern writers loses nothing in point of merit by comparison with the productions of their competitors of the North. The natural mental, moral, social, and sentimental qualities which differentiate the people of the Northern from the people of the Southern States—differences whose origin dates back for centuries—and which are due to peculiarities of race, education, and social customs, are clearly displayed in the poetry produced during the war, and which, to careful students, furnish data for curious and interesting speculations.

It is impossible to measure fully the influences of the power of song—of the plaintive ballad, the lofty and heroic lyric, the rollicking parody, or even the rude, doggerel camp-fire "catches"—in the progress and results of the war. It is certainly true, as far as the South is especially concerned, and as I have said in the introduction to my book, "The War Poets of the South," "the voices of our poets cheered the despondent, nerved the brave to dare and do heroic deeds, comforted the absent, the sick and the dying. They often filled the soul with lofty aspirations, soothing and brightening the loneliness and darkness of the prison, kindling and keeping alive the fires of patriotism, and

urging on, to glory or the grave, thousands upon thousands of the best, the bravest, truest and noblest spirits that ever went forth to battle for their country and to defend the Cause which they conscientiously believed to be right, and worthy of the sacrifice of life itself."

In the book referred to I give the names of twenty-three of the most prominent Southern poets of that period, and cite the poems and songs which, in my opinion, represent their best productions. Among these Ticknor's name and poems occupy the conspicuous place they justly merit. Hayne calls Ticknor's "The Virginians of the Valley" a splendid lyric, and James Maurice Thompson says that in its direct, clear, ringing expression, in the strength of its simplicity, and the naturalness of its art, it reminds him of Beranger. That these opinions of such competent judges are well deserved, will be readily admitted by all who can feel the power, the dominating spell of true lyric poetry. Let us listen to it:

"THE VIRGINIANS OF THE VALLEY.

"The knightliest of the knightly race
That, since the days of old,
Have kept the lamp of chivalry
Alight in hearts of gold;
The kindliest of the kindly band
That, rarely hating ease,
Yet rode with Spotswood round the land,
And Raleigh round the seas;

"Who climbed the blue Virginian hills
Against embattled foes,
And planted there, in valleys fair,
The lily and the rose;
Whose fragrance lives in many lands,
Whose beauty stars the earth,
And lights the hearths of happy homes
With loveliness and worth.

"We thought they slept!—the sons who kept
The names of noble sires,
And slumbered while the darkness crept
Around their vigil-fires;
But, aye, the 'Golden Horseshoe' knights
Their Old Dominion keep,
Whose foes have found enchanted ground,
But not a knight asleep!"

Another poem of his which commemorates the fate of the Confederate cruiser *Alabama*, and twines a wreath of laurel about the name of its gallant captain, also fully reaches the high-water mark of Ticknor's lyric gift; its rhythmic, easy swing, its allusions to the splendor and mystery of the sea, its wealth of fine metaphors, and the spirit of olden romance breathing from its vivid and throbbing lines, place it in the forefront of ballads of its kind.

"THE SWORD IN THE SEA.

"The billows plunge like steeds that bear
The knights with snow-white crests;
The sea-winds blare like bugles where
The Alabama rests.

"Old glories from their splendor-mists
Salute with trump and hail,
The sword that held the ocean lists
Against the world in mail.

"And down from England's storied hills,
From lyric slopes of France,
The old bright wine of valor fills
The chalice of Romance.

"For here was Glory's tourney-field,
The tilt-yard of the sea;
The battle-path of kingly wrath,
And kinglier courtesy.

"And down the deeps, in sumless heaps,
The gold, the gem, the pearl,
In one broad blaze of splendor, belt
Great England like an earl.

"And there they rest, the princeliest
Of earth's regalia gems,
The starlight of our Southern Cross,
The sword of Raphael Semmes."

I have read and re-read with unalloyed pleasure the collected poems and songs of Dr. Ticknor, and have wondered at his ability to produce so much verse of excellent quality and fine artistic finish during the necessarily rare intervals of leisure which come to a man engaged in the trying and arduous duties of a country physician with a large practice. The fact proves the genuineness of his poetic endowment, and the dominating power of it over his heart and soul. As a born poet he was compelled to sing, the divine vision wooed him and he must needs follow, and though he never reached, nor attempted to reach, the empyrean heights of song, in his lowlier flights his wings were sure and vigorous, and the tender senti-

ment, the simple, unartificial music of his verse, cannot fail to appeal strongly and lastingly to the hearts of all lovers of true poetry.

Room remains for me to only say a word or two of Ticknor's rare gem of a poem called "Little Giffen," one of his war-ballads. It is better known, perhaps, than any other of his poems, and well deserves its prominent place in the voluminous collection of our American war poetry. Its terrible pathos; its stern realism, picturing in a few masterly lines the horror, the gloom, and glory of war, the passion of patriotism, the heroic sense of duty inflaming the soul of even a mere boy of sixteen, and the splendid fervor of the concluding stanza, give to this ballad the distinction it has won in popular esteem. While there were scores of such youthful heroes on both sides in our civil war, yet the fact that this poem was not the creation of a poet's fancy, but that the incident, as related, actually happened—Dr. Ticknor being the "good Samaritan" who took the poor battle-battered stripling-hero to his house and nursed him—adds unique interest to the story:

"LITTLE GIFFEN.

"Out of the focal and foremost fire,
Out of the hospital walls as dire;
Smitten of grape-shot and gangrene,
(Eighteenth battle, and *he* sixteen!)
Spectre! such as you seldom see,
Little Giffen, of Tennessee!

"'Take him and welcome!' the surgeon said;
'Little the doctor can help the dead!'
So we took him; and brought him where
The balm was sweet in the summer air;
And we laid him down on a wholesome bed—
Utter Lazarus, heel to head!

"And we watched the war with abated breath,—
Skeleton Boy against skeleton Death.
Months of torture, how many such?
Weary weeks of the stick and crutch;
And still a glint of the steel-blue eye
Told of a spirit that wouldn't die,

"And didn't. Nay, more! in death's despite
The crippled Skeleton 'learned to write.'
Dear mother, at first, of course; and then
Dear captain, inquiring about the men.
Captain's answer: of eighty and five,
Giffen and I are left alive.

"Word of gloom from the war, one day;
Johnston pressed at the front, they say.
Little Giffen was up and away;
A tear—his first—as he bade good-by,
Dimmed the glint of his steel-blue eye.
'I'll write, if spared!' There was news of the fight;
But none of Giffen—he did not write.

"I sometimes fancy that, were I king
Of the princely Knights of the Golden Ring,
With the song of the minstrel in mine ear,
And the tender legend that trembles here,
I'd give the best on his bended knee,
The whitest soul of my chivalry,
For 'Little Giffen,' of Tennessee."

I am sure even the small number of Dr. Ticknor's poems which I have reproduced here will be amply sufficient to justify the praise which has been bestowed upon his best poetic

work, and that it is right to call him "one of the truest and sweetest lyric poets this country has yet produced." As expressing my own opinion of him as man and as poet, I cannot do better than to quote the concluding paragraph of Hayne's memoir:

"The man's soul,—sturdy yet gentle, stalwart yet touched by a feminine sweetness—informed them always; and, if it can hardly be said of his lyrics that each was 'polished as the bosom of a star,' still the light irradiating them seldom failed to be light from the heaven of true inspiration."

MARGARET JUNKIN PRESTON

Margaret Junkin Preston was born in the city of Philadelphia in 1820. Her father, the Rev. Dr. Junkin, who was the founder of the Lafayette College, in Pennsylvania, moved to Virginia and in 1848 became the president of Washington College, in Lexington, now known as the Washington and Lee University. Gen. Robert E. Lee succeeded Dr. Junkin as president of this great institution of learning.

In 1857 Miss Junkin married Prof. J. T. L. Preston, one of the faculty of Virginia Military Institute, with which famous school he was connected until his widely lamented death, July 15, 1890. Mrs. Preston's brother-in-law, the immortal "Stonewall" Jackson, it will be remembered, was for ten years one of the professors of this famous school. Mrs. Preston's home was at Lexington, where she lived to within a few years prior to her death, which occurred in Baltimore, March 28, 1897. Her son, George, is a prominent physician and surgeon of Baltimore, and has made a name for himself in medical literature.

Margaret J. Preston

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Even as a girl Mrs. Preston was an earnest and diligent student of literature, and her bright mind was influenced and cultivated by the study of the works of great authors. The early inclination of her taste in this direction is clearly indicated by a passage in one of her charming sketches of her travels in Europe, wherein she describes Elleray, the home of Christopher North; she says:

"When I was a child of a dozen years I used to pore with delight over dear Kit North's 'Lights and Shadows of Scottish Life,' and when I grew older I often carried, in my childish rambles, a volume of his Essays with me, and his 'Noctes Ambrosianæ' I might well know by heart; so Elleray was a sort of shrine to me, and I came to it with something of a pilgrim's veneration."

She was accustomed to read and study very hard at night, and to this over-taxing of her eyes, aggravated later on by a serious sickness, was due the impairment of her eyesight, which troubled her greatly in after life, compelling the interruption of all literary labor by long intervals of rest. But with the assistance of an amanuensis, she was, nevertheless, enabled to produce a large amount of valuable literary work, in verse and prose. Her contributions appeared in high-class magazines and journals, and she published five volumes of poems.

She has enriched American literature. The people of the South, especially, should be very proud of her and cherish her memory. She has been largely instrumental in establishing the high esteem in which Southern literature is now held among all discriminating students in this country and in Europe. She consecrated her abilities faithfully and ardently to the service of the beautiful, the true, and the good.

There are but few female poets whose poetic scope and singing powers are superior to those of Mrs. Preston. She illustrates in a marked manner the devotional, the religious spirit, the pure ethics which, to an unusual degree, characterize the best work of our best Southern poets. Referring to her partial blindness which, continually growing worse, finally compelled her to abstain from writing altogether, the case of Philip Bourke Marston, the blind English poet, has a peculiarly pathetic interest. In Mrs. Preston's sketch of Marston, published in *Lippincott's Magazine* after the poet's death, she says:

"From his writings it would never be gathered that he was blind; nor, indeed, was he willing that in the slightest degree any abatement in the judgment formed of his poems should be made, in consequence of his terrible affliction. Nor would he have let it been known, could he have helped it, that he was blind; he was very adverse to having his

calamity alluded to, and in both his prose and poetical writings, and in all his letters, he constantly speaks like a man who had clear eyesight."

Mrs. Preston and Mr. Marston were great friends, and corresponded with each other frequently.

Like many others of the sons and daughters of Genius, Mrs. Preston "learned in suffering" what she has "taught in song." She was often made to pass through the fiery furnace of affliction. In the laurels twined about her brow many a sharp thorn of sorrow was hidden. Her severest domestic bereavement was the death of her noble and brilliant husband. The terrible blow shattered an ideal home, and nearly crushed her heart. But her profound religious faith, her unwavering trust in the Saviour, her pure heart, her hope of immortality, not only sustained her in all her trials, but added sweetness, light and strength to her spirit, a deeper insight, a more delicate charm, a loftier range to her poetry. Concerning her method of work, she once wrote to a friend:

"I have never given myself up to literature as my life-work, because too busy a wife, mother, and friend for that luxury—for many years I have been the mistress of too large a household, to be able to command the wide margins of leisure which go to the making of a literary life. In the dedication of 'Old Song

and New,' in a sonnet's breadth, is the account of the way I have always written. The poems that would have utterance, were crowded mainly into some little interstice not at the moment filled with more imperative things."

This book—"Old Song and New"—contains many fine and vigorous poems, portraying nature, and human life, in their manifold phases.

"Silverwood: A Book of Memories," which appeared in 1856, was her first published book. It is a story descriptive of Southern life, simple, true, and full of tender feeling. Its keynote is struck by the epigraph which its author selected: "From the sessions of sweet, silent thought, I summon up remembrances."

"Beechenbrook" is a narrative poem of the war between the States, written during the terrible conflict. It is the story of a Southern homestead. The mistress of that home is the heroine; the hero is a Confederate officer, who fights and dies for the cause of the South. The theme of the poem depicts the experiences of the wife in equipping her husband for the field; her endurance of the agony of suspense while he is "at the front"; the privations and sufferings she was called upon to endure, in common with the heroic women of the South, during those dark days, and her glorious resignation when the final and fatal blow came. It is a

poem vivid with fire and action and is still a valued book in many a Southern household.

Then followed from the press "Old Song and New," "Cartoons from the Old Masters," "For Love's Sake," and "Colonial Ballads, Sonnets and Other Verse." This last volume is dedicated to her friend, Jean Ingelow. The "Colonial Ballads" are spirited narratives of historic events and legends, taken from the earliest annals of our country. Alluding to this book the author says: "One would think I was a regular daughter of the Puritans, when, truth to tell, I have not a drop of Puritan blood in my veins." The sonnets in this volume are graceful and artistic; in fact, few English poets excel Mrs. Preston's work in this difficult branch of the poetic art. This volume also contains the charming series of verse entitled "Childhood of the Old Masters."

Mrs. Preston's prose is distinguished by refinement of style, and pronounced originality. Her "Aunt Dorothy," a story of old Virginia plantation life, partly in dialect, is clever, and bright with local color. In her "A Handful of Monographs" she gives us in a most interesting way an account of her experiences, impressions and observations during her travels in Europe. Among other prominent examples of her elevated prose style must be mentioned her sketch of "Stonewall" Jackson, in the *Century Magazine,* and the biographical sketch of her life-

long friend, Paul Hamilton Hayne, which forms the introduction to the complete edition of the works of the poet.

Many of her best poems appeared in the religious and secular press, and some of her most notable poems were written for public celebrations in honor of famous men or great historic events. The one written for the Edgar Allan Poe ovation in New York is one of the finest products of her pen; it was entitled

"AT LAST.

"If he were here tonight—the strange rare poet,
Whose sphinx-like face no jestings could beguile—
To meet the award at last, and feel and know it
Securely his—how grand would be his smile!

"How would the waves of wordless grief, that over
His haughty soul had swept through surging years,
Sink to a mystic calm, till he would cover
His proud pale face to hide the happy tears!

"Who knows the secret of that strange existence—
That world within a world—how far, how near;
Like thought for closeness, like a star for distance—
Who knows? The conscious essence may be here.

"If from its viewless bounds the soul has power
To free itself for some ethereal flight,
How strange to think the compensating hour
For all the tragic past, may be tonight!

"To feel that, where the galling scoffs and curses
Of Fate fell heaviest on his blasted track,
There, Fame herself the spite of Fate reverses—
Might almost win the restless spirit back.

"Though the stern Tuscan, exiled, desolated,
Lies 'mid Ravenna's marshes far away,
At Santa Croce, still his stone is fêted,
And Florence piles her violets there today!

"Though broken-hearted the sad singer perished,
With woe outworn, amid the convent's gloom,
Yet how pathetic are the memories cherished,
When Rome keeps Tasso's birthday at his tomb!

"So, though our poet sank beneath life's burden,
Benumbed and reckless through the crush of fate;
And though, as comes so oft, the yearned-for guerdon,
No longer yearned for, since it came too late:

"*He is avenged tonight!* No blur is shrouding
The flame his genius feeds: the wise, the brave,
And good, and young, and beautiful are crowding
Around, to scatter heart's-ease o'er his grave!

"And his Virginia, like a tender mother
Who breathes above her errant boy no blame,
Stoops down to kiss his pallid lips, and smother
In pride her sorrow, as she names his name.

"—Could he have only seen in vatic vision
The gorgeous pageant present to our eyes,
His soul had known one glimpse of joy elysian!
—Can we call no man happy till he dies?"

Her "Centennial Ode" for the Washington and Lee University is also a notable example of her Muse in its most elevated mood. But it is in themes that appeal to the holiest sentiments of the heart, that uplift the imagination to the serene height of spiritual contemplation, that touch the conscience or depict the essential elements of religious faith—it is in these fields that Mrs. Preston's poetic powers show them-

selves at their best. Her dominating devotional nature is happily illustrated by the following incident, and in her own words: "One day, as I was sighing over the fast falling leaves, my gay-hearted young niece said to me, 'Oh, but think how much more room it gives you to see the beautiful blue sky beyond.' Is it not a sweet thought, she says, that as our little joys and pleasures, and earth's many lovely things fade and pass away, they open spaces for us, through which we may look into the illimitable depths above us? To those who mourn lost treasures, earth is sad; but, then, how many happy homes and happy hearts there are, after all, and it becomes us to say, with our dear Elizabeth Browning:

> "'Through dearth and death,
> Through fire and frost,
> With emptied arms, and treasures lost,
> We praise Thee while the days go on.'"

From the clear fountains of love and faith, that flow from the hearts of children, Mrs. Preston frequently drank the inspiration which quickens her verse; and many a tender lesson she has drawn from the artless charm of childhood, and its winning ways. Let me illustrate this by quoting a pertinent poem from her "Ballad and Other Verse"; it is called

"THE ANGEL UNAWARE.

"Abroad on the landscape pale and cold,
Blurred with a patter of autumn rain,
I gazed, and questioned if it could hold
Ever the sweet, old joy again.
The color had faded from earth and sky,
Mists hung low where the light had lain,
And through the willows a fretful sigh
Moaned as their branches swept the pane.

" 'My days must darken as these,' I said—
'Out of my life must summer go;
Its russeted memories, dim and dead,
Shiver along my pathway so;
No more the elastic life comes back—
The leap of heart and the spirit-glow
That never had sense of loss or lack,
Whether my lot were glad or no.'

"But here on my musings broke a child,
Fresh from a rush in the pinching air;
And, kissing my hand, she gayly smiled,
Speaking no word, but leaving there
A handful of heart's-ease, blithe and bright.
What had become of my cloud of care?
It had haloed itself in a ring of light
Over the angel unaware!"

This pure, predominating note of spirituality, this ever-present sense of the value of the inner life of man, this deep consciousness of the high and eternal purpose for which the human soul is created, are the leading characteristics of Mrs. Preston's poetry. There is no artifice in her verse. She writes from the heart. Her ideals are lofty, and her treatment never lowers them. Her versification is smooth, elegant, and melodious. She awakens in her readers

wholesome thoughts and good aspirations, and always gratifies the artistic sense in the structure of her verse.

Concerning the essentially religious atmosphere which is such a distinct attribute of Mrs. Preston's poetry, I may be here permitted to indulge in some remarks on religious poetry in general. Dr. Samuel Johnson, in his life of Waller, touches upon this subject in massive words, which are occasionally quoted by critics as a justification for the assumption that religious verse, in the very nature of things poetic, cannot be verse of the highest order. These critics are of the opinion that Johnson condemns religious poetry as unsuitable for the loftiest flights of the Muse, and that success has rarely been attained in devotional verse. Dr. Johnson says:

"Of sentiments purely religious it will be found that the most simple expression is the most sublime. Poetry loses its luster and its power because it is applied to the decoration of something more excellent than itself. All that pious verse can do is to help the memory and delight the ear; and for these purposes it may be very useful; but it supplies nothing to the mind. The ideas of Christian theology are too simple for eloquence, too sacred for fiction, and too majestic for ornament; to recommend them by tropes and figures, is to magnify by a concave mirror the siderial hemisphere."

The tests of truth and experience, in my opinion, prove the learned Doctor's dictum faulty. Scriptural and devotional themes are as well suited for the highest flights of poetical genius as any other theme worthy of the contemplation and elaboration of the sons and daughters of Song. It is necessary only to point to the works of Milton, Young, Cowper and Dryden, to Pope's "Messiah," and to hundreds of others, in all countries, who have embellished the literature of the world with sacred and devotional poetry, in order to prove that this class of writing is the peer of any, and that it is able to express the highest art and the noblest genius. Dr. Johnson, in his criticism of Waller and Watts, does not directly say that religious subjects are unfit for poetic treatment, but writers, on his authority, have said so, purposely or ignorantly misunderstanding his true meaning, which appears to be that the style of devotional poetry must be suited to the theme, whether that be a subject of piety or a motive to piety—a statement with which we all must agree.

It is true that a great deal of so-called religious poetry is simply trash; but so is a vast amount of stuff written on secular themes, and sadly miscalled "poetry." But many of our hymn-writers are true poets, and their verse genuine poetry. Their abilities, as Milton sublimely says, "are the inspired gifts of God,

rarely bestowed, and are of power to imbreed and cherish in a great people the seeds of virtue and public civility; to allay perturbations of the mind, and set the affections in right tune; to celebrate in glorious and lofty hymns the throne and equipage of God's almightiness, and what He works and what He suffers to be wrought with high providence in the Church; to sing victorious agonies of martyrs and saints, the deeds and triumphs of pious nations, doing valiantly through faith against the enemies of Christ."

These distinguishing qualities of genuine religious poetry are amply apparent in Mrs. Preston's collection of poems of faith and comfort published under the title of "For Love's Sake." These poems, the author says, were published "for the good they may do." Ah, who can estimate fully the extent of that "good"? Poetry of this sort is never limited by time or circumstance. It may affect a life, or change the course of a soul. That which is eternal has no limitations.

Mrs. Preston never paints a cloud through which the eye of faith cannot see the shining of the everlasting stars. Every cross has its crown. Her page is illumined by "the light that never was on sea or land." In her garden of poesy bloom the perennial flowers of love, faith, and hope; the laurel and the palm top the loftiest heights of her conceptions. No purer,

sweeter voice was ever heard in the choir of our native songsters—nay, in many particulars she leads them all, and her only rival among recent writers of devotional verse in England is Frances Ridley Havergal. By the side of Mrs. Preston's pure, earnest, simple, soulful and liquid verse, some of the devotional poetry of Mrs. Hemans, of Moore, Byron, Willis, sounds artificial and strained; their hymns and Scriptural poems are conventional; the keen eye of Christian faith detects the flaw in their polished marble; the inner ear hears the discordant jar of the silver strings—a true soul only can sing true songs; behind the true artist must stand the true man.

It is difficult to select examples out of this little volume, where all are gems "of purest ray serene." Where can be found a sweeter, gentler embodiment of childlike faith in the paternal love of the Saviour, than in the sonnet entitled "Doubt"? The poem which gives the book its title is also a beautiful one. "Read to Sleep," with its deep pathos, will bedim our eyes with sympathetic tears. "Sanctum Sanctorum," and "Who Knoweth," are radiant with the celestial light of truth and love. In this volume, as in the majority of Mrs. Preston's poems, hearts that need the solace of religion, all who want to find expression for the thoughts of the soul when it contemplates the mysteries of Life and Death, all who suffer and are heavy

laden, will find comfort, and rest, and the peace that passeth understanding. How touchingly she gives lyric utterance to the divine desire for immortality, for the reunion with our loved ones in the spirit-life beyond the grave, in the sonnet entitled

"WE TWO.

"Ah, painful-sweet! how can I take it in!
That somewhere in the illimitable blue
Of God's pure space, which men call Heaven, we two
Again shall find each other, and begin
The infinite life of love, a life akin
To angels,—only angels never knew
The ecstasy of blessedness that drew
Us to each other, even in this world of sin.

"Yea, find each other! The remotest star
Of all the galaxies would hold in vain
Our souls apart, that have been, heretofore,
As closely interchangeable as are
One mind and spirit: Oh, joy that aches to pain,
To be together—we two—forever more!"

Permit me to digress here briefly for the purpose of discussing, in a general way, the subject of ordinary verse-writing, which has become one of the fashionable pastimes of the day. No class, profession, or trade seems to be exempt from the ravages of amateur rhyme-making. It bids fair to become as great a public nuisance as professional base-ball playing. Sentimental misses in their teens, whose embryo souls float like "airy nothings" on moonbeams, feeding on flirtations and flowers,

and developing chronic dyspepsia by cramming their suffering stomachs with ice-cream and caramels; petrified spinsters of uncertain age, whose hearts live on the "might-have-been" memories of their maiden past, hopelessly, yet fondly still, striving to warm themselves by occasionally stirring the ashes and embers of the fires which once burned upon the ruined shrines of their youth's romance; crusty bachelors, of a moralizing, pessimistic turn of mind, the result of spleen and the soured milk of human kindness; old men and women, whose natural garrulity finds pleasant vent in harmless metrical effusions, distinguishable from senile prose only by the trick of rhyming words at the end of the lines—all this host of amateurs, to which must be added "the mob of gentlemen (and ladies) who write" professionally, the regularly licensed manufacturers of poetical ware, the haberdashers-in-ordinary to his majesty, the King of the Muses—all this heterogeneous multitude combine to fill the groves of Parnassus with their chirpings, nestled in the sheltering leaves of our magazines, piping lustily from the columns of our newspapers, or boldly rushing into the literary market between the covers of prettily printed books, in red, white or blue binding, with some romantic name, in gay and gorgeous golden letters, smiling from the title-page at the hesitating book-buyer.

Wandering over the flat and monotonous wilderness of modish verse-mongery, the sight of an oasis, where golden-fruited palms and fragrant flowers indicate the presence of Pierian springs of pure poetry, comes like a vision of celestial delight to the weary soul of the wayfarer. He enters and rests beside the pure and living waters and, with a hearty "thank God!" quenches the thirst of his soul.

The feeble chirpings of the callow broods that harbor in the bric-a-brac bushes of the arid region beyond, are forgotten as we listen to the rapturous melody of the lark "singing at Heaven's gate," or to the mocking-bird's wonderful song, who gives us the whole orchestra of the woods at once through his own little silvery throat. When the true, the born poet sings, the heavens listen, and the heart of man is strangely stirred, as in the presence of a divine thing. He sings of hope, joy, sorrow, faith, patriotism, love—of all that constitutes the immortal part of man. He deals in eternities, in the spiritual and poetic phases of the universe. He is inspired of God; he is one of His prophets, a teacher of divine and everlasting verities. The true, the born poet looks upon the gift of genius as a holy trust, for the proper exercise of which he expects to be held responsible before the judgment bar of God. But, pray, what good purpose do the "tweedle dum, tweedle dee" rhymesters of our day serve? The emblem of the true poet is the eagle, whose

mighty wings bear him upward to the sun, "sailing in supreme dominion, through the azure deep of air," but the bric-a-brac, tum-de-dum de tum-de-dum rhymester is as little fitted to fly as the tadpole, yet he passes as a singer, and imposes his rhymed inanities upon a long suffering and altogether too indulgent reading public. But I have maligned the reputation of a respectable tadpole by forcing him into comparison with twaddling rhymesters, for the tadpole has within him the power of developing and, in due time, he will grow into an honest, full-grown frog; but who has ever heard of the development of a poetaster into a poet? He remains a poetically undeveloped "pollywog" forever!

It is impossible to repress reflections akin to the foregoing, whenever we are called upon to show the contrast between poetasterish verse-making, the dabbling in rhymed gush and skim-milk sentimentality, and the really inspired work of true poets, among whom, by divine right of genius, Mrs. Preston will always hold a place of honor. Her work—as does the work of every true poet—worthily illustrates the following quatrain which, by personification, attempts to give a definition of poetry, as well as a description of the queen of the Muses:

"Her form is Beauty, and her soul is Truth;
She knows not death—hers is immortal youth;
Her native speech is Song; who listens hears
The voice of God, and music of the spheres."

EDWARD COATE PINKNEY

In the rush and whirl of this modern world of ours the man whom Death has taken off the crowded stage of Life is soon forgotten; there are but few exceptions to this general rule, and even these exceptions, the great names, the lofty mountain-peaks of Science, Art, Literature, lose their original distinctness, growing dimmer as the mists of time envelop them; only here and there some star of the first magnitude still shimmers on the horizon, a speck of glory in the gray twilight of the past; the lesser lights, however, do not linger long, and are soon lost from sight in the blank void of oblivion.

Voices that once thrilled the world with the power of eloquent utterance, or charmed it with the melody of sweet and impassionate verse, fade at last into thin and almost indistinguishable echoes.

Even poets are no exception to this inexorable rule. If we will look back over two or three generations, confining our view to the limits of our own country, and more particularly to the narrow province of Poetry, how

few are the names that still shine undimmed by the mists of time! On the other hand, how many there are—even of once well-known names—one must now, regretfully, inscribe on the constantly lengthening list of "forgotten poets"!

It is my purpose to deal, briefly, with one of these "forgotten poets"; nevertheless, a true poet; one who, in his day, deservedly won the praise of his contemporaries; who sang exquisite songs and wrote noble poems, worthy of preservation; and yet his name is now rarely mentioned; a song or two of his, perhaps, may be occasionally quoted, and yet it is more than likely that the person quoting them is not able to give the name of the author. I have reference to Edward Coate Pinkney, of whom Poe, in his characteristic way, once said: "It was the misfortune of Mr. Pinkney to have been born too far South. Had he been a New Englander, it is probable that he would have been ranked as the first of American lyrists."

Edward Coate Pinkney was born in London, October 1, 1802, while his father, the famous William Pinkney, was United States minister to Great Britain. His mother was the sister of Commodore Rogers. In 1811 the family returned to the United States, and again established their residence in Baltimore, where the boy became a student in Baltimore College. He made rapid progress in his studies, and even

at this early age gave proof of intellectual gifts of a high order. When fourteen years of age his uncle, Commodore Rogers, procured for him the appointment of midshipman in the Navy, in which he served six years. In the course of his duties he became acquainted with various parts of the globe; visiting many scenes of classic story, especially during a long cruise in the Mediterranean. His beautiful poem "Italy" shows clearly the profound impressions which that ideal land of art, romance, and song made upon the young poet's imagination.

On the death of his father, in 1822, he resigned his position in the Navy and returned to Baltimore, studied law, and was admitted to the bar of that city, and devoted himself to his law practice, finding time, however, amid the exacting duties of a lawyer, to court the Muses and exercise the lyric genius with which Nature had so richly endowed him.

On October 12, 1824, he married Miss Georgiana McCausland, a very beautiful and accomplished young lady, who was, doubtless, the inspiration for his delightful lyric "A Health," and whose charms he has so gracefully pictured in "A Picture Song."

In the following years a small volume of his poems appeared from the press of Joseph Robinson, but the leading poem in this collection, "Rodolph," had appeared in print previously, but anonymously. The reading public,

as well as the critics, gave the volume a hearty reception, and its success induced the author to print another edition, enlarged by the addition of several fine miscellaneous poems. "Rodolph" is a long, romantic story of love and crime, in the Byronic vein, abounding in allusions to classical myths and metaphors, yet, although there are lines full of genuine poetic beauty, the style of the poem is rather stilted, and the general effect of the poem is monotonous. But in the miscellaneous poems, and in the songs contained in this little book, of which we doubt that a single copy can be found to-day, there are gems of poesy unsurpassed in beauty and brilliancy in English literature.

In 1826 he was appointed professor of rhetoric and belles-lettres in the University of Maryland, and in the following year assumed the editorship of a political journal published in Baltimore, and called *The Marylander*. His health, however, was failing rapidly, and on April 11, 1828, at the age of twenty-six, he died. His grave is in Greenmount cemetery.

In an introduction to a collection of Pinkney's poems, N. P. Willis asks this question, "What would poetry be in a world where Toil is not the inseparable twin of Excellence?" In discussing the curious question further, Willis says: "The wild horse runs very well in the prairie, but we give our admiration to the 'good continuer,' whose powers of endurance have

been developed by toilsome training. Whether the faineant angels, who 'sit in the clouds,' admire most the objectless careerings of the wild steed, or the arrowy endurance of the winner of the sweep-stakes—whether the fragmentary poetry, dashed off while the inspiration is on, and checked, ill-finished, when the whim evaporates, be more celestial than the smooth and complete product of painful toil and disciplined concentration—I have had my luxurious doubts. Pinkney's genius, as evidenced on paper, has all the impulsive abandonment which marked his character and course of life. He was a born poet—with all needful imagination, discrimination, perception, and sensibility; and he had, besides, the flesh and blood fulness necessary to keep poetry on terra firma."

In my opinion the rich and fervid imagination of this poet, his power to paint pictures with words, his command of rhythmic music, his classic elegance of diction, are qualities which exhibit themselves at their best in his poem "Italy." Written in the manner of Goethe's "Kennst Du das Land," it contains passages of supreme beauty. I quote it in full:

"ITALY.

"Know'st thou the land which lovers ought to choose?
Like blessings there descend the sparkling dews;
In gleaming streams the crystal rivers run;
The purple vintage clusters in the sun;

Odors of flowers haunt the balmy breeze,
Rich fruits hang high upon the vernant trees;
And vivid blossoms gem the shady groves,
Where bright-plumed birds discourse their careless loves.
Beloved!—speed we from this sullen strand,
Until thy light feet press that green shore's yellow sand.

"Look seaward thence, and naught shall meet thine eye
But fairy isles, like paintings on the sky,
And, flying fast and free before the gale,
The gaudy vessel with its glancing sail;
And waters glittering in the glare of noon,
Or touched with silver by the stars and moon,
Or flecked with broken lines of crimson light,
When the far fisher's fire affronts the night.
Lovely as loved! toward that smiling shore
Bear we our household gods, to fix for evermore.

"It looks a dimple on the face of earth,
The seal of beauty, and the shrine of mirth;
Nature is delicate and graceful there,
The place's genius, feminine and fair:
The winds are awed, nor dare to breathe aloud;
The air seems never to have borne a cloud,
Save where volcanoes send to heaven their curled
And solemn smokes, like altars of the world.
Thrice beautiful!—to that delightful spot
Carry our married hearts, and be all pain forgot.

"There Art too shows, when Nature's beauty palls,
Her sculptured marbles, and her pictured walls;
And there are forms in which they both conspire
To whisper themes that know not how to tire:
The speaking ruins in that gentle clime
Have but been hallowed by the hand of Time,
And each can mutely prompt some thought of flame—
The meanest stone is not without a name.
Then come, beloved!—hasten o'er the sea,
To build our happy hearth in blooming Italy."

Surely it would be difficult indeed to find lines more felicitous in their description of the land of Art and Song.

In the poem entitled "The Old Tree," wherein he touches upon memories of his childhood, Time is personified in a fine stanza; he calls him

"The great Reformist, that each day removes
The old, yet never on the old improves—
The dotard Time, that like a child destroys,
As sport or spleen may prompt, his ancient toys,
And shapes their ruins into something new."

The sad feeling which accompanies our consciousness of the slight value and the evanescent character of fame, is well expressed in this verse:

"Pass, wasted powers; alike the grave
To which I fast go down,
Will give the joy of nothingness
To me, and to renown;
Unto its careless tenants, fame
Is idle as that gilded name,
Of vanity the crown,
Helvetian hands inscribed upon
The forehead of a skeleton."

From the "Prologue" he wrote and read at an entertainment in Baltimore for the benefit of the Greeks, then engaged in their struggle for independence—1823—I quote the following ringing lines:

"We are free,
And so can wish the total earth to be;
Greece *shall*—Greece *is*—each old heroic shade,
Draws with her living sons his spectral blade,
And combats, proud of times so like his own,
Like Theseus' ghost at storied Marathon!"

But as a painter of female loveliness, as a writer of love-lyrics, as an interpreter of the language and dreams of Love, Pinkney stands in the front rank of our singers. Some of them have been well described as "entire and perfect chrysolites." In four lines of one of these songs, what a brilliant portrait of a beautiful woman the poet gives us—

"Exchanging luster with the sun,
A part of day she strays—
A glancing, living human smile,
On Nature's face that plays."

How classically pure and delicate are these lines from "A Picture Song":

"Apollo placed his harp, of old, awhile upon a stone,
Which has resounded since, when struck, a breaking harp-string's tone;
And thus my heart, though wholly now from early softness free,
If touched, will yield the music yet, it first received of thee."

Again, culling at random, I take from one short poem the following three couplets:

"Woman, a child of Morning then—
A spirit still—compared with men."

"The low strange hum of herbage growing,
The voice of hidden waters flowing."

"Wet rain-stars are thy lucid eyes,
The Hyades of earthly skies."

Listen to this delicious lyric—there is not a more perfect love-song in the English language; it is Pinkney's

"THE SERENADE.

"Look out upon the stars, my love,
And shame them with thine eyes,
On which, than on the lights above,
There hang more destinies;
Night's beauty is the harmony
Of blending shades and light;
Then, Lady, up—look out, and be
A sister to the Night!

"Sleep not! Thine image wakes for aye
Within my watching breast;
Sleep not! from her soft sleep should fly,
Who robs all hearts of rest;
Nay, Lady, from thy slumbers break,
And make the darkness gay,
With looks, whose brightness well might make
Of darker nights a day."

The very soul of chivalric love, the sweetest music that can be charmed from the minstrel-lute of Eros, lives in and breathes from the following

"SONG.

"We break the glass, whose sacred wine
To some beloved health we drain,
Lest future pledges, less divine,
Should e'er the hallowed toy profane;
And thus I broke a heart that poured
Its tide of feelings out for thee,
In draughts by after-time deplored,
Yet dear to memory.

"But still the old impassioned ways
And habits of my mind remain;
And still unhappy light displays
Thine image, chambered in my brain;
And still it looks as when the hours
Went by like flights of singing-birds,
Or that soft chain of spoken flowers
And airy gems, thy words."

But I must desist from delving still further into the mine of this "forgotten" poet's gems of song, despite the pleasure the employment would give me. In conclusion I will reproduce his spirited and brilliant poem entitled "A Health"; perfect in form and melody, it is destined to live in our literature as long as the sentiment it illustrates shall animate the hearts of men, causing them to praise and to honor the purity and the loveliness of the woman who is, in the belief of every true lover, "of her gentle sex the seeming paragon."

"A HEALTH.

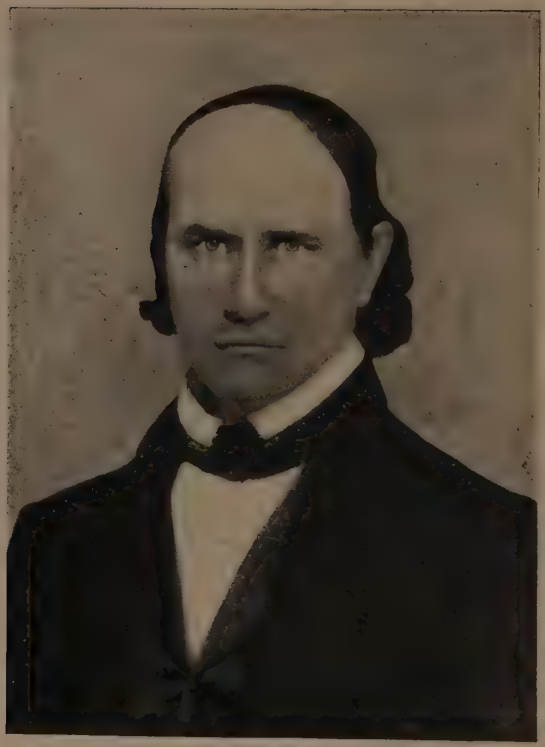
"I fill this cup to one made up of loveliness alone,
A woman of her gentle sex the seeming paragon;
To whom the better elements and kindly stars have given
A form so fair, that like the air, 'tis less of earth than heaven.

"Her every tone is music's own, like those of morning birds,
And something more than melody dwells ever in her words;
The coinage of her heart are they, and from her lips each flows
As one may see the burthened bee forth issue from the rose.

"Affections are as thoughts to her, the measure of her hours;
Her feelings have the fragrance, the freshness, of young flowers;
And lovely passions, changing oft, so fill her, she appears
The image of themselves by turns—the idol of past years!

"Of her bright face one glance will trace a picture on the brain,
And of her voice in echoing hearts a sound must long remain;
But memory such as mine of her so very much endears,
When death is nigh my latest sigh will not be life's but hers.

"I fill this cup to one made up of loveliness alone,
A woman of her gentle sex the seeming paragon—
Her health! and would on earth there stood some more of such a frame,
That life might be all poetry, and weariness a name!"



Thos. H. Chivers.

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THOMAS HOLLEY CHIVERS

From the list of so-called "forgotten poets," in which the shining name of even so sweet and brilliant a lyrist as Edward Coate Pinkney is included, I select another, to whose life and work peculiar circumstances, personal and literary, have given more than ordinary interest—I have reference to Thomas Holley Chivers, of Georgia, an erratic genius, a prolific writer of poems unique in form, frequently amazing in their bizarre fancy and chaotic imagery, and yet, despite their incongruous composition, showing frequent flashes of the genuine poetic afflatus, which, in his day, attracted to him the attention of the literary world.

Dr. Thomas Holley Chivers was born at Digby Manor, near Washington, Georgia, in 1807. His father was a rich planter, of English ancestry, settled originally in Virginia. Thomas Holley was the eldest of seven children. He graduated with honors in medicine at Transylvania, now the University of Kentucky, in 1828. Practicing his profession for a few years, Dr. Chivers finally devoted himself

to literary pursuits, and achieved distinction both in prose and in poetry. He was an accomplished classical scholar, and was especially conversant with the Hebrew language and its literature.

When twenty-five years of age he went North, marrying there Miss Harriet Hunt, by whom he had four children, who died while their parents were temporarily residing at Digby Manor. A son and two daughters were afterward born, and grew up. When the son died, his four children were adopted by the poet's second sister, Mrs. Brown, who is still, I believe, a resident of Decatur, Georgia; another sister, Mrs. Potter, is living in Connecticut.

In 1856 Dr. Chivers made his final home in Decatur, where he died on the eighteenth day of December, 1858.

His versatility of talent was remarkable; even as an inventor he achieved success, receiving a valuable prize at a State fair held in Savannah, for his invention of a machine adapted to the unwinding of the fiber of silk cocoons, and he was also noted for his skill as a portrait painter. His decease was widely noted in the press of the United States, and several European journals mentioned it. A distinguished Danish author, Professor Gierlow, wrote and published a beautiful poem as a tribute to his memory. In a neglected and obscure spot, in the little cemetery at Decatur,

in an unnoticed grave, the poet's remains lie buried. Well may we ask, what is Fame?

> Is it worth while to barter life for fame?
> The hollow, mocking echo of a name,
> Which, drifting down the years, dies out at last,
> Lost in the soundless desert of the Past.

Judged by the portrait of him, which I have seen, Dr. Chivers was a very handsome, distinguished-looking gentleman. His mouth was full and expressive, a broad forehead, large and lustrous eyes, and long dark hair, marked him distinctly as a person of culture and intellectual prominence. Those who knew him personally bear witness to his courtly manners, and the charm of his conversational powers. William Gilmore Simms took great interest in Chivers and his writings, playfully calling him "the wild Mazeppa of letters," teasing him about his choice of strange words, and rallying him on the "monotony of his sorrow," to which friendly censure Chivers is said to have replied, with equal good humor, advising Simms to stop writing stupid novels, and "take up literature as a pleasure." As so little seems to be publicly known concerning the life and works of Dr. Chivers, especially by the people of the South, where he was born, among whom he lived and labored for years, writing strange poems and singing mystical songs, I am sure the biographical facts I have given will be found interesting.

I am indebted for these to Mr. Joel Benton's sketch of Chivers, embodied in Mr. Benton's charming little volume entitled "In the Poe Circle" (Mansfield & Wessels, New York), who, in turn, acknowledges his indebtedness to Mr. John Quincy Adams, of Washington, Georgia, a relative of the poet, for the authentic data furnished. Mr. Benton's little book is a valuable contribution to the history of American literature, and students of the lives and works of our poets owe gratitude to Mr. Benton for his painstaking labor, and his piquant commentaries, in this attractive field. The book I mention contains a collection of Mr. Benton's articles on Edgar Allan Poe, published during recent years in various magazines and journals, the chapters embracing the following subjects: I. The Precursor of Poe; II. The Poe-Chivers Controversy; III. Poe's Opinion of the Raven; IV. Thomas Holley Chivers; V. Baudelaire and Poe—a brief parallel; VI. Bibliography, enumerating a selected list of magazine articles referring to Poe and his works, amounting to one hundred and twenty-four articles.

The paramount interest of the book, to Southern readers, particularly to Georgians, is the fact that it associates with the great name of Poe, the name of the Georgia poet, Chivers, and recalls the details of the famous Poe-Chivers controversy, which, from time to time, engaged the attention of the literary world for

many years. This controversy had its origin in the alleged indebtedness of Poe, especially in his immortal Raven, to the comparatively obscure and unknown poet, as regards the measure, the rhythmic conception, the peculiar form, the style and "atmosphere" which distinguish Poe's most remarkable poems. The charge is made by Chivers himself, and by his friends, that Poe appropriated these qualities from his Georgia contemporary's methods of poetical composition—the haunting melody, the bizarre phraseology, which make Poe's poems so charmingly unique; that he, in fact, passed them off as his own invention. This statement is the basis for the claim that Chivers, in these particulars, was the precursor of Poe. Alluding to this, and speaking of Chivers, Mr. Benton says:

"That he came very near to being a considerable poet, and that he embodies more of the Poe atmosphere and melody than exist anywhere out of Poe's verse, will not be hard to prove. * * * Before Poe was known, this poet—T. H. Chivers, M. D.—was writing various weird and musical lyrics, which, I presume, went from time to time through the Southern press. Nearly sixty years ago he began collecting them in book form, and there were seven or eight volumes of them in all—a much more voluminous legacy than Poe's."

One of these volumes was called "Eonchs of Ruby," and a poem in it called "Lily Adair" is the one which, according to Mr. Benton's opinion, shows the most remarkable coincidence of accent, rhythm, and style with Poe's work, provided Chivers wrote it before Poe was known to him. Evidence is given which seems to point to the fact that Chivers wrote in the Poe manner over sixty, perhaps seventy, years ago. Poe published the Raven in 1845. The poem of Chivers reproduced in Mr. Benton's book certainly appears to corroborate this statement. Other poems in the same volume, "Eonchs of Ruby," deepen the impression of remarkable coincidence, the general prevalence of the Poe manner; the poem, for instance, called "The Vigil of Aiden," with its refrain, "Never, Nevermore," and

> "While the Seraphim all waited,
> At the portal congregated
> Of the city golden-gated
> Crying: Rise with thy Lenore!"

The same characteristic appears in the poem "Avalon," the one called "Lord Uther's Lament for Ella," and "The Dying Swan."

Mr. Benton calls attention to the many Poe-like phrases peculiar to Chivers's poems, such as "Aiden," "Auber," "Abysmal," "Eulalie," "Asphodel," "Evangel," "Avalon," etc. On this point Mr. Benton comments as follows:

"Two poets could not have fallen upon them by original choice, to say nothing of the atmosphere which was drawn around them. Of course, there is no question that Poe used the machinery and hypnotism better than Chivers did or could. One leaves an immortal halo around his name, and the other a nebulous mist which failed to condense into a star."

The purport of Mr. Benton's criticism of the poetry of Chivers—examples of which he quotes, to show its grotesqueness and absurd pomp of phraseology—is to the effect that, notwithstanding all this, if Chivers set the mould and pace for Poe, on which Poe erected his own fame, Chivers "will surely have some claim to remembrance."

To Mr. Benton's opinion I beg to add my own belief that Chivers, outside of the honor of having "set the mould and pace for Poe," is entitled to remembrance as a poet of erratic yet distinct genius, and as the author of lines and verses of much grace and beauty. That the world knows nothing of him now, and that his name is scarcely ever mentioned, save occasionally in connection with the Poe-Chivers controversy, should not be taken too seriously; other meritorious minor poets have lived and died and faded out of view and the memory of the world, leaving no claim to remembrance, save, perhaps, a line or two in some biographical dictionary; yet, in their day and generation, they

were recognized and honored as legitimate children of the Muses—and such a one was Chivers. That he was noted in his time is an unquestionable fact. From 1837 to 1858 he published eight volumes of poems. He was a contributor to some of the leading magazines of that day. Bayard Taylor mentions him in his "The Diversions of the Echo Club," and says of him: "He is a phenomenon * * * one of the finest images in modern poetry is in his 'Apollo':

> "'Like cataracts of adamant uplifted into mountains,
> Making oceans metropolitan for the splendor of the dawn.'"

He was known and appreciated in England. It is stated that a complete set of his works is on the shelves of the British Museum, and yet, says Mr. Benton, the editor of Appleton's Biographical Dictionary found it impossible to get any facts of this Georgia poet's life, in spite of diligent efforts to do so.

Swinburne was an admirer of Chivers's poetry. When Bayard Taylor was in England, thirty years ago, says Mr. Benton, the name of Chivers happened to be mentioned in Swinburne's presence. "Oh, Chivers, Chivers," exclaimed Swinburne, "if you know Chivers, give me your hand"; and Mr. Stedman says that an allusion to Chivers, in Swinburne's presence, would cause the latter to repeat, with

great hilarity and gusto, whole passages from Chivers's books. One critic, it is stated, suggested that Swinburne not only repeated Chivers's verses, but that he has put into his own poetry many marks of this American poet's influence.

While the mass of Chivers's poetical work is of small worth,—Mr. Benton rather too slashingly, I think, calls it "mainly trash,"—it is nevertheless true that there are lines and stanzas gleaming with the pure gold of poetic inspiration, and in form and manner show the touch of an artist hand. Mr. Benton presents several of Chivers's poems in full, besides numerous extracts from others; but, for my purpose, it will be sufficient to reproduce here only a few quotations in justification of the opinion I have expressed as to the fine poetic and lyric qualities that can be found in the writings of Chivers; for instance, here are four verses of a poem originally published in the *Waverly Magazine,* and called "The Little Boy Blue"—

"The little boy blue
  Was the boy that was born,
In the forests of Dew
  On the mountains of Morn.

"There the pomegranate bells—
  They were made to denote
How much music now dwells
  In the nightingale's throat.

"On the green banks of On,
In the city of No,
There he taught the wild swan
Her white bugle to blow.

"Where the cherubim rode
On four lions of gold,
There this cherub abode
Making new what was old."

The following stanza is from "Ellen Æyre" (published in Philadelphia in 1836):

"Like the Lamb's wife, seen in vision,
Coming down from heaven above,
Making earth like fields Elysian,
Golden City of God's love—
Pure as jasper—clear as crystal—
Decked with twelve gates richly rare—
Statued with twelve angels vestal—
Was the form of Ellen Æyre—
Gentle girl so debonair—
Whitest, brightest of all cities, saintly angel,
Ellen Æyre."

The following is a remarkably Poesque stanza from Chivers's poem, "Lily Adair":

"From her Paradise-Isles in the ocean,
To the beautiful City of On,
By the mellifluent rivers of Goshen,
My beautiful Lily is gone!
In her chariot of fire translated,
Like Elijah she passed through the air,
To the City of God, golden-gated—
The home of my Lily Adair—
Of my Star-crowned Lily Adair,
Of my God-loved Lily Adair—
Of my beautiful, dutiful Lily Adair."

From Chivers's poem "Avalon" Mr. Benton quotes the following remarkable passages:

"For thou didst tread with fire-ensandalled feet,
Star-crowned, forgiven,
The burning diapason of the stars so sweet,
To God in Heaven.

"The violet of her soul-suffused eyes
Was like that flower
Which blows its purple trumpet at the skies,
For Dawn's first hour."

"Four little Angels killed by one cold Death
To make God glad!"

"Thou wert like Taleisin, 'full of eyes,'
Babbling of Love!
My beautiful, Divine Eumenides!
My gentle Dove!"

"Kindling the high-uplifted stars at even
With thy sweet song,
The Angels, on the sapphire sills of Heaven,
In rapturous throng
Melded to milder meekness with the Seven
Bright lamps of God to glory given,
Leant down to hear thy voice roll up the leven,
Where thou art lying
Beside the beautiful undying,
In the valley of the passing of the Moon,
Oh, Avalon! my son! my son!"

That Chivers could write clear, strong, nobly imaginative verse, is evident from the following lines of a poem on the death of Poe:

"Like the great prophet in the desert lone,
He stood here waiting for the golden morning;
From Death's dark vale I hear his distant moan,
Coming to scourge the world he was adorning—
Scorning, in glory now, their impotence of scorning.

"And now in apotheosis divine,
He stands enthroned upon the immortal mountains
Of God's eternity, forevermore to shine—
Star-crowned, all purified with oil-anointings—
Drinking with Ulalume from out the eternal fountains."

In Mr. Benton's very interesting little book the so-called "Poe-Chivers controversy" is fully entered into; a brief summary of the details will suffice here. The charge of alleged borrowing by Poe from the poetry of Chivers, was made by Chivers himself. The "Raven" and "Annabel Lee" were cited in proof of their assertion. Friends of Chivers repeated the charge, and the defenders of Poe vigorously denied it, claiming that the charge was absurd. The controversy was bitterly waged by both sides, and column upon column was devoted to the contest in magazines and newspapers. Poe and Chivers corresponded with each other; among the letters to Chivers, now in possession of Mr. Adams, there is one from Poe, detailing some of his many troubles, and mentioning the *Stylus*—the magazine which he proposed to start. In this letter Poe says: "Please lend me fifty dollars for three months. I am so poor and friendless, I am half distracted; but I shall be all right when you and I start our magazine."

Poe gave high praise in the *Broadway Journal* to Chivers's volume "The Lost Pleiad and Other Poems," published in 1845. Chivers's "Ellen Æyre" was published at Philadelphia in 1836.

Chivers and his champions affirmed that passages in verse and prose, quoted by them as examples, were written by Chivers "long anterior" to the parallel passages in Poe's writings. A friend on the Poe side states that Poe said, in speaking of the "Raven," "I pretended to no originality in either the rhythm or meter"; yet to his friend, William Ross Wallace, Poe said, alluding to the "Raven," "I have just written the greatest poem that ever was written."

Mr. Benton sums up the "Poe-Chivers controversy" in the following manner:

"What conclusion must be drawn from the facts? Each reader will be certain to make his own. No critic will doubt that to Poe belonged the wonderful magic and mastery of this species of song. If to him who says a thing best the thing belongs, no one will hesitate to decide that Poe is entitled to the bays which crown him. It is a fact that, with all the contemporary airing of the subject—it is Poe's celebrity and not Chivers's that remains. The finer instinct and touch are what the world takes account of. Chivers, except at rare intervals, did not approach near enough to the true altitude. He put no boundary between what was grotesque and what was inspired. He was too short-breathed to stay poised on the heights, and was but accidentally poetic. But we may accord him a single leaf of laurel, if no more, for what

he came so near achieving in the musical lyric of "Lily Adair." Truly enough Shakespeare says:

> " 'The lunatic, the lover, and the poet
> Are of imagination all compact.'

Their mental and spiritual territories interblend. The same frenzy is the endowment of each—as charcoal is in essence the diamond. As you differentiate and develop it, you make your titular distinction and place. But it is not a small thing to have been mingled in some slight association with genius, and to have some credit you with it. In an oriental poem the clay pipe speaks of its contentment, since it cannot be a rose, of having, by a fortunate association, attained to some of the vase's fragrance."

Speaking of Chivers, Mr. Benton says:

"The pathetic conclusion of the whole matter of his life and work is embodied in the one word—almost. He did not quite touch the high and ambitious empyrean at which he aimed. There were great visions before him, but he could not put them into perfectly clarified expression. At times he nearly found the vehicle of words that uplifts, but some lack of needed impulse or finish, some want of surrounding atmosphere, or some other partial defect, tells the story of defeat. But there is room enough for a hospitable memory of him, and reason enough to honor his daring. We

may put him, at least, in the Poe rubric, and recall, in exalting Poe, a few of the typical attributes which gave Chivers his place in poetry."

Recently this prolific subject has had another interesting revival, through the new and elaborate edition of Poe's works, edited by Professor Harrison of Virginia, in which nearly all of the letters that passed between Chivers and Poe are published. In an appendix Professor Harrison discusses the "Poe-Chivers controversy" and asserts that the Georgia poet's claims are not tenable, and that, in fact, Poe was the precursor of Chivers. This latest renaissance is again supplemented by the publication in the *Century Magazine* for January and February, 1903, of the Poe-Chivers papers, edited by Professor George E. Woodberry, and introduced as being "the first authentic account of one of Poe's most interesting friendships."

Surely, with these publications, presenting data so full and minute, we may safely conclude that this subject is now closed, finally, all the evidence being in, and the verdict left to the judgment of the public. Professor Woodberry's editing is interspersed with bright and appropriate remarks and critical comments on the matter, quality, and style of Chivers's poetry, with characteristic quotations, and one poem, "The Lady Alice," is given in full.

Speaking of the alleged indebtedness of Poe, in his "Raven," to the Georgia poet, Professor Woodberry says:

"It is not too much to grant that in the many atmospheric influences that surrounded the germination of the Raven (and their number was a multitude), these two poems (Chivers's 'To Allegra Florence in Heaven' and 'Uranothen') familiar to Poe, and certainly 'Uranothen,' had a place. The two poets were extraordinarily sympathetic, but what was intense and firm in Poe, was diffused and liquescent in Chivers, who was, in truth, a kind of double to him in what seems sometimes a spiritualistic, sometimes a grotesque way. He was indeed to Poe not unlike what Alcott was to Emerson, and the comparison helps to clarify the confusion of their mutual relations, while it maintains Poe's mastery unimpaired."

Professor Woodberry closes his article and his appreciation of Chivers with these words:

"Apart from Poe, Chivers was an interesting illustration of his times; the vast, unfathomable ocean of American crudity was in Chivers, Alcott, Whitman, Mark Twain—these four. He was, without regard to his poetry, a most estimable man in his intellectual sympathy, his ideals and labors, and kindly and honorable in all his relations with his fellows."

Professor Woodberry's allusion to "the vast, unfathomable ocean of American crudity" in Chivers, is peculiar—does he mean that this "crudity" is to be found in Chivers, Alcott, Whitman and Mark Twain, or are we to understand that Chivers was a compound of Alcott, Whitman and Mark Twain?

POE AND SOME OF HIS CRITICS

No poet of great distinction—certainly none in America—has been more persistently, and frequently fiercely, criticised, both for his life as a man, and in regard to the quality and value of his poetry, than Edgar Allan Poe. As to the former—Poe's moral transgressions and defects of character, a word or two, here, will suffice. The mentors have fully done their duty, long ago, in pointing out his grievous sins, and in drawing the appropriate and obvious moral, deducible from such a deplorable life as his was. Without doubt Poe sinned grievously, but also, most grievously did he suffer for his sin; but quite as deplorable and obnoxious must be held the fact that some of his most distinguished critics were not satisfied with honest condemnation, but permitted uncharitableness and even downright malice to pervert and poison their spoken and printed judgments. So virulent, at one time, was this attack upon the dead poet, that, in one specially scurrilous case, it caused a European writer to ask whether there was no law in America "to keep curs out of the cemeteries." Let us rather say, with our Halleck, in his poem on Burns:

Edgar A. Poe.

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"A nation's glory—be the rest
Forgot—she's canonized his mind;
And it is joy to speak the best
We may of humankind."

But in regard to the quality and value of Poe's poetry, there is always ground for legitimate and candid expressions of opinion. Such criticism is always in order, and worthy of respectful consideration. To one of these critics of Poe's poetry, I wish to devote brief attention, because he expresses a view of it which I know to be shared by some other recent reviewers of Poe's poetic work.

"Poe's gift," says this writer, "flourished upon him like a destructive flame, and the ashes that it left are like the deadly poison which some one has learned to powder out of a plant-root. As a mere potency, dissociated from qualities of beauty or truth, Poe must be rated almost highest among American poets, and high among prosaists; no one else offers so much pungency, such impetuous and frightful energy, crowded in such small space.

"We owe to Poe the first agile and determined movement of criticism in this country, and, though it was a startling dexterity, with but little depth, which winged his censorial shafts, he was excellently fitted for the critic's office in one way, because he knew positively what standards he meant to judge by, and kept up an inflexible hostility to any offense against them. He had an acute instinct in matters of

literary form; it amounted, indeed, to a passion, as all his instincts and perceptions did; he had also the knack of finding reasons, good or bad, for his opinions, and of stating them well.

"Whatever the cause, his brain had a rift of ruin in it at the start. For him there was always 'a demon in the sky'; and, though he kept a delicate touch, that stole a new grace from classic antiquity, it was the frangibility, the quick decay, the fall of beautiful things that excited him."

On the surface this criticism appears to be blandly conservative and plausible, but when carefully analyzed it will be found to have the same fault which this critic charges against Poe's method of criticism—it has but little depth. For instance, I cannot see any force in the distinction this critic makes between Poe's potency and his poetry. He says he would rate him almost highest among American poets merely as a "potency," and dissociated from qualities of beauty or truth, whereas, as a matter of common sense it follows, that to dissociate Poe from the qualities of beauty or truth, which characterize his poetry, is to deprive him of his potency altogether, and make him as flabby as a jelly-fish. I know of no other potency in Poe except that which is derived from the charmful beauty, the fine inspiration of his poetry; and if, as his critic maintains, Poe's potency entitles him to be rated "almost highest

among American poets," it is simply because his potency and his poetry are synonymous.

To me the most remarkable element of Poe's poetry seems to be the poet's almost idolatrous worship of Beauty—of Beauty manifesting itself not only in exquisite material forms, but also in intangible, supernatural and spiritual revelations. In this, in my opinion, lies his finest, his most subtle strength; in this, and through this, he exercises his utmost potency.

To Poe, Beauty was Truth. To him nothing was essentially true which, in form and spirit, did not reach the standard of his ideal conception of the Beautiful.

The durability of his fame as an artist in poetry, the cause of that unique excellence, the spirit of originality which breathes from his writings are largely due, I think, to Poe's marvelous idiosyncrasy concerning Beauty, and his peculiar belief in Truth as the essence of Beauty. Poe himself has asserted his profound reverence for the True, and he insists that it is the office of Taste to inform us of the Beautiful, that we may wage war against Vice on the ground of her deformity, her opposition to that which is harmonious, in a word, to Beauty. In his famous essay on "The Poetic Principle," Poe says:

"He who shall simply sing, with however glowing enthusiasm, or without however vivid a truth of description of the sights, and sounds,

and odors, and colors, and sentiments, which greet him in common with all mankind—he, I say, has failed to prove his divine title. There is still a something in the distance which he has been unable to attain. We have still a thirst unquenchable, to allay which he has not shown us the crystal springs. This thirst belongs to the immortality of Man. It is at once a consequence and an indication of his perennial existence. It is the desire of the moth for the star. It is no more appreciation of the Beauty before us—but a wild effort to reach the Beauty above.

"Inspired by an ecstatic prescience of the glories beyond the grave, we struggle by multiform combinations among the things and thoughts of Time, to attain a portion of that Loveliness, whose very elements, perhaps, appertain to eternity alone. And thus, when by Poetry, or when by Music—the most entrancing of the poetic moods—we find ourselves melted into tears—we weep then, not as the Abbot Gravina supposes, through excess of pleasure, but through a certain petulant, impatient sorrow at our inability to grasp *now*, wholly, here on earth, at once and forever, those divine and rapturous joys, of which through the poem, or through the music, we attain to but brief and indeterminate glimpses.

"The struggle to apprehend the supernal Loveliness—this struggle, on the part of souls fittingly constituted—has given to the world

all that which it (the world) has ever been enabled at once to understand and to feel as poetic."

And in another place he defines the poetry of words as the "rhythmical creation of Beauty."

To this ideal of his Poe adhered loyally, and the quickening spirit of it is felt, in its fullest power, in his splendid, soul-haunting Raven, and in others of his best poems. The idea of dissociating this worship of esthetic Beauty, this adoration of the holiness of Beauty and of the truth of Beauty, from the poetic potency of Poe, seems to my mind a preposterous proposition.

That Poe's gift "flourished upon him like a destructive flame," is, unfortunately, as true of him as it is and has been true of many who possess the fatal gift of genius, and who, for various reasons, and through the power of evil influences, do not rule their spirits wisely and well. It is one of the deplorable aspects of genius, and the history of the world is full of instances of its misconduct and moral aberrations. But in Poe's case, I deny that "the ashes it left are like a deadly poison." If the works left by Poe are ashes, they are ashes of glory, and the spark of genius still lives, and will forever live, in them. His gift harmed no one but himself; nor has he left us a line which any one can, consistently and honestly, declare contains a deadly poison. I feel sure that, for all time,

Poe will rank among the eminent poets of the nineteenth century, and as the most original, entrancingly lyrical of American poets.

EDGAR ALLAN POE.

We will not wound his spirit, by reciting
The sins and errors of his earthly ways,
Whose Upas shadows still his name are blighting,
Nor stain with Slander's spume his poet-bays;

"No further seek his merits to disclose,
Nor draw his frailties from their dread abode,
(There they alike in trembling hope repose)
The bosom of his Father and his God."

Let Pharisees—the "unco guid" and pious,
Hurl harsh anathemas upon his head,
And ghoulish critics, kin to Ananias,
Revile the memory of the laureled dead;

A nobler task be ours; a theme more pleasing,
With gentler feelings shall our hearts inspire;
Let us from Discord's bonds our minds releasing,
Feel but the thraldom of his magic lyre.

From shadowy shores of Pluto's realm infernal,
The Raven comes and croaks his "nevermore"!
And robed in light and loveliness supernal,
The Shade appears, whom angels name "Lenore."

For us, again the poet's fancy peoples
With phantom forms, the horror-haunted dells,
Or bids the spirits dwelling in the steeples,
Pour golden floods of music from the bells.

With him we roam, in mood sedate and sober,
The woods, beneath October's skies of gloom,
And at a tomb, "by the dark tarn of Auber,"
Hear Psyche read the legend, "Ulalume."

Once more we see the lurid splendors, gleaming
From the "strange city" which Death's own shall be;
Lie in the grave with him, of "Annie" dreaming,
Or her who sleepeth "by the sounding sea."

Thus moved, and guided by this mighty master,
Our souls enthralled by his resistless will,
Through scenes of mystic glory or disaster,
We mount with him the Muses' sacred hill,

Where what was godlike in him, and which never
Can be denied him now, nor soiled with shame—
His glorious genius—has been shrined forever,
In the white temple of eternal fame.

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